

# COUNTRY LIFE

VOL. XVIII.—No. 453.

[REGISTERED AT THE  
G.P.O. AS A NEWSPAPER.]

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 9th. 1905.

[PRICE SIXPENCE,  
BY POST, 6½d.]



SPEAIGHT.

MRS. LEWIS HARCOURT'S CHILDREN.

157, New Bond Street, W.



THE Journal for all interested in

Country Life and Country Pursuits

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### EDITORIAL NOTICE.

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## THE CASE AGAINST THE BUILDING BYE-LAWS.

A SELECT COMMITTEE of the House of Lords is open to the criticism that is applied to nearly every British institution, but still it works with a certain degree of effectiveness, as will be evident to anyone who will read the volume of evidence taken before the Committee appointed to enquire into the Public Health Acts (Amendment) Bill. They were: Lord Zouche of Haryngworth, Lord Digby, Lord Kenyon, Lord Stanley of Alderley, Lord Hylton, Lord Burghclere, and Lord Allerton. The witnesses examined presented the case against the Bye-laws from nearly every possible point of view. As was orderly and fitting, the first to be called was the Assistant Secretary of the Local Government Board, Mr. Horace Cecil Monro, whose chief business was to explain to those present the general working of the Bye-laws; how the local body was expected to draw up its proposal on paper with a large margin, whereon the Local Government Board placed its comments and amendments. The custom appears to be to toss this paper to and fro between Whitehall and the local authority in question until the officials get their way, for this seems to be the end in every case. The local body may suggest what it pleases, but in the end the view of the Local Government Board prevails. However, it seems that this process goes on as a rule for two or three years, at the end of which the parties are in the same position as if an edict had been issued from the central authority at first. It is a very bad arrangement to begin with, and it would have been singular had it not led to dissatisfaction and disagreement. The other witnesses called were well calculated to set forth the case which has been growing during the last few years against the notorious Building Bye-laws, though those who are best acquainted with the subject will be of opinion that they did not go quite far enough. The policy of the Building Bye-laws Reform Association may be summed up in the proverbial saying that "Half a loaf is better than no bread." They considered that the exemption clauses, though by no means a satisfactory solution of the difficulty, were an amelioration of it, and possibly could be got through Parliament. Much can be said for this view, and yet as strong a case may be made out against it. A great deal of trouble and expense have been incurred in the attempt to get the measure through Parliament. Possibly it may not come up again during the existence of the present Government, as a dissolution may occur at any moment, either in the autumn or in the spring.

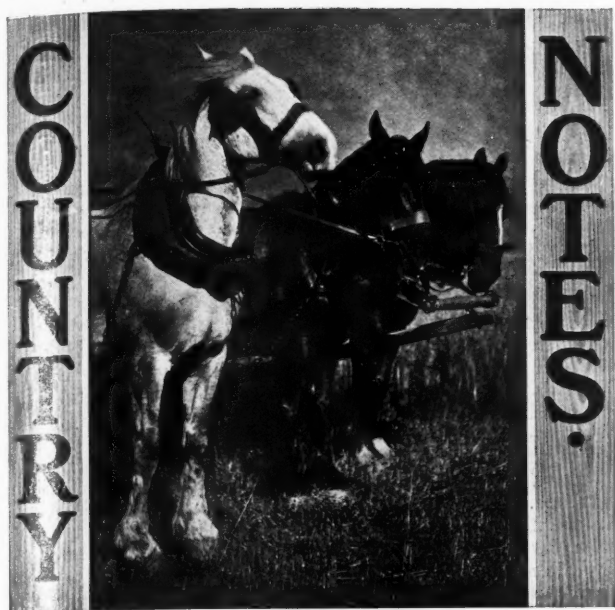
Wherefore it would have been quite as easy to take a much stronger line, and insist once and for all on a complete recasting of the Building Bye-laws.

The evidence, as was inevitable, deals very much with detail. Sir William Chance, to whom much gratitude is due, as the energetic and indefatigable chairman of the Bills Reform Association, naturally enough dwelt at considerable length on his own experience; he built his house round a courtyard, and wanted very much to have an overhang on one side, by which, instead of getting what is now a passage, he should have had something more like a gallery. Half a mile off a neighbour of his could carry out this project quite easily, because there were no bye-laws, but the Bye-laws in Sir William's district forbade it. This is a very good instance of the frivolous and trifling manner in which these regulations promote interference with the best building. Sir William Chance had nothing to say against the particular authority which administered the Bills, and, indeed, he had experienced much courtesy at its hands; but the fact was that this body, as Lord Allerton said, was hampered by its own Bills. Another gentleman, whose experience was extremely valuable, was Mr. Alexander Rose Stenning, a justice of the peace for Sussex, who has had a great deal of trouble in his attempt to build at East Grinstead. One of the points he made has often been insisted upon in these columns; it is that the existence of the Building Bye-laws is fatal to experiment, yet all our experience shows the imperative necessity of trying new methods in the erection of house accommodation in the rural districts. The problem, as set forth by more than one expert, is how to erect a cottage so cheaply that, at such a moderate rent as an agricultural labourer may be expected to pay, it will yield a fair return for the capital invested. In other departments of industry it will generally be found that the producer finds ways and means of meeting the wants of his customers. Here, however, you have a set of bye-laws coming in which prohibit the architect and the builder from doing the best that they can in this way. Whoever doubts it will do well to read the evidence given by Mr. E. D. Till, whose aim at Ainsford, as our readers well know, has not been to put money in his purse, but to help the labouring population of his native village to find comfortable homes at a reasonable price. The strange thing is that, though a cottage be set in the midst of the tenant's own garden or allotment, precautions are as rigorously insisted upon as if it were one in a terrace or situated in the midst of a crowded population. But it is in the case of the solitary cottage that experiments could be tried with effect.

At the exhibition of cheap cottages now being held at Letchworth one can see many instances of houses being put up in disregard of Building Bye-laws and yet possessing all the requisites to make those who dwell in them comfortable. There are shown there material and methods of building which were not contemplated by those who drew up the Building Bye-laws. As a matter of fact, they seem to have come to the conclusion that knowledge of sanitation and architecture and building had been exhausted before they came on the scene, and that there were no new worlds to conquer or new discoveries to be made. The consequence is that expert witnesses were able to show in regard to many items—the height of the walls, for instance, the material out of which these are made, the system of drainage, and so on—that the upholders of the Building Bye-laws have fallen behind the times. They have also done their best to keep the others back, and were it not for this spirited rebellion against their mediævalism, cottage-building would soon be brought to a standstill. Naturally enough, the æsthetic side of the argument did not receive its due amount of attention in a body which prides itself on sticking to business considerations; but it would have been well if the Committee could have been taken out and shown the actual cottages that have sprung up in England under the Building Bye-laws, if they could have recognised how grim, ugly, and forbidding in appearance, how monotonous and inconvenient they are, and yet how expensive in comparison to what they might have been. On the other hand, they should also have been shown the old English cottages that were put up without any oversight except that of the yeoman or farmer or cottager who designed them. There they would find beauty, comfort, and variety to an extent never attained since these regulations came into force. They could scarcely believe that anyone, who looked on this picture and on that, would ever again have a word to say in favour of Building Bye-laws. Still, the Committee have ordered the Bill to be reported, and the initial step has thus been taken in the direction of much-needed legislation.

### Our Portrait Illustration.

OUR frontispiece this week is a portrait of the children of Mrs. Lewis Harcourt. Mrs. Harcourt was a daughter of the late Mr. Walter Burns of North Mymms Park, Hatfield, and married, in 1899, Mr. Lewis Vernon Harcourt, who inherited Nuneham Park on the death of his father, Sir William Harcourt, in 1904.



THE agreement between Russia and Japan has at length been signed and the war has come to an end. Whatever may be the ultimate consequences, this event must be of cheering import to both parties in the immediate present. The soldiers have been in the field for a very long time, and the prospect before them was one of those winter campaigns in Manchuria which try the hardest constitutions; and no doubt the prayer of both for some time to come will be for peace. Victor and vanquished alike have been put to much expense both of blood and treasure. They have lost the flower of their young men, and many industries must have suffered in consequence. Experience shows, however, that the victor in a prolonged war makes a speedy recovery. At any rate, after most of our own great struggles we always seemed to rush forward at express speed, and it cannot be forgotten that the beginning of modern German prosperity dates from the conclusion of the war with France. Moreover, the end makes for a lasting peace. The East to Russia—if it be rightly understood—has been little better than a running sore, and her ambitions in Asia, that now are curbed, were no source of strength. Japan on her part has been established as a World Power, and probably for a generation or two will be allowed in peace to develop a mercantile prosperity.

In connection with this, a communication which appeared in *The Times* on Tuesday deserves to be read with attention. It consisted of a summary from the *Partie*, setting forth the military preparations that are being made by Germany on the French border. It appears that the rolling-stock of the German railways is receiving special attention, waggons being cleared out of the stations and sent back empty to the locality they came from. At Metz officers are instructing their soldiers on "imminent war," the look-out for spies on the frontier has been made much more acute, and the different military works are inaccessible to the public. Roads, too, are being repaired as if for the march of a great army, and it is said that war material has been collected at Vionville and Metz. It may possibly be that nervous French eyes are exaggerating the proportions of what is being done, as there is nothing that speaks directly of military preparations. The Germans may devote a considerable amount of attention to their roads and railways, they may drill their troops, and send a certain amount of war material to the frontier without meditating any such *coup* as that of 1870. The majority of the European public will decline to believe that the Emperor William and his Ministers are meditating anything of the kind; at the same time, there is evidently a turmoil of feeling in Germany which will require careful and skilful guidance on the part of those who have public influence if war with one nation or another is to be avoided. Unfortunately many people are of opinion that not France but Great Britain is threatened.

A very short time ago we passed in review some of the magnificent legacies left by the rich people of to-day for beneficent purposes, and showed how their generosity would compare with that of the pious benefactors of the Middle Ages. Since then another action of a similar kind has to be chronicled. Mr. E. G. Bawden, acting through Mr. Edgar Speyer, has given £100,000 to be applied to purposes of charity and benevolence, and for the advancement of knowledge, especially in the alleviation of human suffering. Acting on the authority entrusted to him Mr. Speyer has divided this gift among

some thirty-seven institutions, of which University College, London, obtains £16,000, and the East End Emigration Fund £10,000. Of the other beneficiaries it may be said without fear of contradiction that no one of them is unworthy to receive what is given it, and the Bawden Fund promises to become historical in each case. The incident is remarkable in many ways, and not least so in showing that the rich men of to-day are fully alive to their responsibilities. Nor in all cases do their fellow-men have to wait till their death before receiving the benefit of their accumulated wealth. The present generation, if it has witnessed the amassing of great fortunes, has also had an opportunity of watching the pleasing spectacle of the dispersal of much wealth among those whose worldly fortune has been in sad contrast with that of the donors.

#### A DREAMER OF DREAMS.

I love not the world, nor care I  
Though its fame and its wealth pass me by—  
A lover of meadows and streams,  
Of forest and mountain and sky,  
A dreamer of dreams.

Not for beauty of women I sigh,  
Nor their love, but at midnight I fly  
To woods where the wan moonlight gleams,  
And list to the nightingale's cry,  
A dreamer of dreams.

And for hours and hours I lie  
Gazing up at the dreamy blue sky,  
And so quiet and peaceful it seems,  
That it looks like Eternity's eye  
To a dreamer of dreams.

I love life, but I fear not to die,  
So they turn my dead face to a sky  
Of wild light, and the sun's dying beams;  
Clasped with rest in my grave I shall lie,  
A dreamer of dreams.

R. G. T. COVENTRY.

With September it may be said that cricket ends for the year. It is true that during the month a few matches are played, but they are merely the foam left behind the boat. All the really interesting events of the year are now settled. The Australians have completed their tour, and are able to look back, we suppose, with considerable satisfaction upon it. They did, indeed, lose all the Test matches that were brought to a definite conclusion, and had the worst of those that were drawn; but their career among the counties has been one of almost unbroken victory, and according to all accounts their venture has been of great pecuniary success, so that they may fairly be said to return to their native land with light hearts and heavy pockets. The county matches, too, are over, and, as we had the pleasure to write last week, Yorkshire has secured the championship for the year—a thoroughly well-merited honour. During the succeeding months, no doubt, many of the old battles will be fought over again in club-houses and wherever cricketers meet; but, at the same time, the eyes of all will be turned to next year, and already there are in the air rumours of changes and of preparations for the season of 1906.

Contrivances are constantly being multiplied for improving the foreign supply of fruit to London and other parts of England, and the adoption of a refrigerating waggon promises to effect a very important change. Under the best conditions, fruit that has to come several hundreds of miles by rail and sea cannot possibly be in such good condition as might be desired when it reaches the market, and in practice it has been found impossible to place at Covent Garden certain of the more delicate peaches and the thin-skinned French grapes in a perfect state. But the result of the experiment tried the other day was to show that if these were carried in a refrigerating waggon they could be offered in Covent Garden in a condition as good as that in which they started. Thus it seems fairly certain that in a little while we shall have a larger supply of these fruits in England than we have had before. English growers may, however, gain advantage in another way. Their strawberries are the best in the world, and it has hitherto been impossible to distribute them perfect as when picked; but the refrigerating waggon promises to overcome the difficulty, so that next year the market gardeners of Kent may expect to make more out of their crops than heretofore.

It is to be feared that the small holder, for whose welfare statesmen are at present so solicitous, will not be in a very fortunate position this year. Most of the produce he depends upon is short, both in quality and quantity; and unluckily for him there is no increase in price correspondent with the home scarcity, because the less he grows the more is the market flooded with stuff from the foreigner. One of the things most to be regretted is the failure in the fruit crop. Apples and plums have yielded less than for many previous years, and though pears have done well in some districts, the crop has not



been good in others. Nuts, curiously enough, are very plentiful, but the prices are not high. By the by, it seems extremely strange that while cultivated nuts have done so well, there should be so scanty a supply of acorns, a fact which does hit the small farmer, for, where oak trees are abundant, he calculates on getting a certain amount of this food for his pigs. Other garden produce, such as potatoes, has not done much better, and we fear that the balance-sheet of the average small holder will not show much to his credit.

At this season of the year, when on the ordinary English manor shooting in earnest is just about to begin, it is to be expected that the usual number of poaching incidents will occur. But no one who is in the habit of reading the daily paper can avoid the reflection that the poacher of to-day is more desperate in his methods than were his predecessors. The village moucher of a generation ago was a comparatively harmless fellow. He went out and snared rabbits or netted a few partridges, and took his chance of a thrashing if the keeper happened to meet him. Circumstances are now completely changed. Putting all romance and sentiment out of the question, game at the present moment is approaching more nearly than it ever did before the condition of poultry. It is reared at a very considerable trouble and expense, and the arrangements made for shooting involve, among other things, a large outlay of money. Nor is this all. The revenue obtained from it has assumed a very much higher degree of importance than it did when the prices of agricultural produce were at a higher level. It is very difficult, therefore, to show any logical distinction between the game on an estate and the poultry in the farmyard; the one is almost as much private property as the other, and the man who nets reared game is as much a thief as he who robs a poultry-yard.

Perhaps that is the very reason why the poacher of to-day has become less scrupulous in his methods. It was very rare for one of the olden time to carry firearms for purposes of offence or defence, though he used a gun often enough in his depredations. But the modern poacher, who is not a countryman, but generally the inhabitant of some town slum, seems to carry a weapon for the express purpose of wounding others. Scarcely a week passes without our finding some account in the public journals of a keeper having been shot at, and, as often as not, wounded or killed. Not only is he exposed to this danger, but cannot defend himself against it, for, should experience teach him to carry and use a gun when he is out watching, public opinion is apt to go against him. The remedy for this state of affairs would seem to lie in a more rigorous interpretation of the law. Poachers who carry firearms, and who discharge them to facilitate their escape, are entitled to no leniency whatsoever. At the best they must in thought at least be guilty of manslaughter, and we fear that frequently they could be convicted of a still greater crime. Magistrates ought to keep this in mind, and if the fraternity of poachers found that the possession of a gun ensured rigorous sentences they might, perhaps, in time be brought to try to do without one.

It is, perhaps, a sign of the increased comfort of our poor people that much of the wild harvest which Nature produces on the hedgerows is allowed to go to waste. The elderberry is a good example. It was a fruit much prized by our forefathers, or rather by their wives, who from it concocted a wholesome and stimulating beverage that Evelyn himself considered to be a "catholicon" for all diseases. To-day it is much to be feared that either the elderberries are left to the birds or are allowed to wither on their stalks. In very great contrast to this is the assiduity in gathering what is frequently its neighbour, the blackberry. This wild fruit, by one of the caprices of luck, has become a great favourite with the humbler class of cooks, and in all the wild country round London people may now be seen every day gathering it into baskets. Some even take the trouble to carry ladders with them, in order that they may reach those ripe and juicy berries which grow at the top of the tallest hedgerows. But the blackberry, too, in more remote parts of the country, is allowed to go to waste, as is also the crab-apple, once so greatly prized for the jelly made from it.

A very keen sense of injustice has long been felt by the British fishermen on the East Coast of Scotland in consequence of the closing of the whole area of the Moray Firth, outside, as well as inside, the three-mile limit, to trawling operations by British boats; and an attempt to escape from the prohibition has been made lately in the shape of an effort to have the prohibition declared *ultra vires* of the Fishery Board of Scotland, which passed it. It has now been decided, by an unanimous opinion of the highest legal authorities of the three departments of the United Kingdom, England, Scotland, and Ireland, that the prohibition is distinctly within the powers of the enactors. The situation, therefore, remains as before, and it cannot but be

felt to be an unsatisfactory one. The right remedy, if it were feasible, as we fully believe, is not to be found in the direction of throwing open the area to trawling. Even the fishermen themselves might prefer its closure. But what they do complain of, with much show of right, is that while British trawlers are excluded from this British firth, its waters are free, outside the three-mile limit from shore, to trawlers of other nations. Thus they have the mortification of seeing foreign trawlers catching in their own waters fish which they are not allowed to trawl for. Obviously this is a hard case, and one that seems to require attention. It has the further disadvantage of conducing to irregularities, such as sailing British trawlers under foreign rating, to evade the prohibition, and so on.

We are somewhat sorry to find that Sir Theodore Martin has ranged himself on the side of those who would view with equanimity the destruction of the "Auld Brig of Ayr." But he bases his argument, as we think, on a false foundation. He seems to hold that the only reason for preserving this relic lies in its connection with the poet Burns, and he says, what is undoubtedly true, that the poem written by the Ayrshire bard is a more enduring monument than any that could be made by lime and stone. That is not the point, however. The old bridges in this country remain as testimony to the skill and thoroughness of builders who lived many hundred years ago. Once destroyed, they can never be replaced, and it ought to be a point of national honour to preserve such interesting remnants of antiquity. The fate not of the old Brig of Ayr alone, but of many others, is hanging in the balance, and we fear that local authorities, who very frequently have an inclination towards vandalism, will feel encouraged in their work of destruction by the support lent them by Sir Theodore Martin.

#### FROM A HORTUS SICCUS.

Little flower of purple thyme,  
Withered since the day I won you,  
When we rested from our climb,  
There she set her foot upon you.  
I have kept you, as I vowed,  
Like the flowers that lovers cherish;  
Thus would fortune make us proud  
Save that hopes, like flowers, perish.  
Yet remembering that day,  
And the words so lightly spoken,  
Still my heart might muse and pray,  
With your faded bloom for token,  
Be the pathways for her feet  
Strewn with flowers of fairest semblance,  
Sparing one, of fragrance sweet,  
Rosemary—that's for remembrance.

H. RAPHOE.

An accident which lately occurred on the Grondle Glen miniature railway in the Isle of Man fortunately was of little importance in its immediate consequences, but is of some large importance from the lesson which it conveys. The driver of the engine fainted while the train was at full speed, and as a natural consequence the train proceeded until the engine came into violent collision with the stop buffers at the terminus. Several of the passengers were more or less severely injured by the shock, but on the whole the small trainload of people have much reason to congratulate themselves on a fortunate escape. But the lesson of the incident seems obvious, namely, that there is so great a danger to life when a locomotive drawing a train full of passengers, even though it be but a miniature train on a small-gauge line, is entrusted to the care of one qualified man only, that a condition which entails much danger ought not to be allowed. We may hope that as a consequence of this mishap it will be made imperative that where the lives of many depend on the safe driving of the engine a second man who understands its mechanism shall be carried on the locomotive to take the driver's duty in case of his being rendered incapable of performing it by accident or ill-health.

The news that there are an unusually large number of seals in the Wash seems to have inspired some of the people who are taking their summer holidays in that vicinity with the idea that "sealing" is a fine sport, and several of the poor things have been caught or killed. It is very unfortunate for the seal of our islands (generally either the common seal or the great grey seal) that he should bear the same name as the Pacific seal which provides the nice fur, for perhaps it is some vague idea of shooting a valuable fur-bearing animal that induces people to be so anxious to compass the death of one. A seal shot in deep water is hardly ever recovered, and unless a seal on shore or in shallow water be shot stone dead, it will almost certainly make its way into deep water and be lost. Out of a large number wounded, but few are brought to bag, and of what use, we would



ask, are they when killed? A few articles of trifling value are made of their skins, their oil is occasionally used, very locally, for sheep dip, but as a rule the carcase is put to no use at all. On every plea, and in every place, save perhaps at the mouth of rivers where they prey on the salmon, we would ask mercy for the seal.

The remarkably good results of last year's salmon netting on the English Dee had led a great many people to the pleasant hope that this and other English salmon rivers were commencing a new career of prosperity. It was a hope which was more than confirmed by the excellent takes in the early days of this season's netting. Unfortunately the early promise has sadly failed of fulfilment, and the later weeks of the netting season, which closed on the last day of August, have been very unproductive. This is the more disappointing, because there were a great number of salmon in the spawning beds. Possibly their efforts may bear good fruits in four or five years' time; but in the meanwhile it is only too probable that the present conditions of inadequate water in the river and more than sufficient pollution will increase rather than diminish, so that on the whole the outlook is not bright, and the most unfortunate feature of all is that these conditions are by no means peculiar to

the Dee, but rather are typical of the present conditions on most of our English salmon rivers.

Edward FitzGerald, in those inimitable letters, which never lose their charm and freshness, tells us that every year, as the autumn came, he used to remark that the leaves were keeping their summer green until an unusually late date, and rather seems to imply that he thinks this pleasant delusion to be common to most men in most autumnal seasons. However that may be, it hardly seems as if it could be a delusion to think that in our present autumn the trees are keeping their leaves more than normally late in all their density, and the leaves their hues of verdure. At the same time, the pastures have been refreshed by the latter rains, so that the whole aspect of England in the South is more ubiquitously green than we see it commonly in September. Another pleasant feature of summer that is prolonging itself well into the autumn is a large population of the swallow tribe. Even the swifts have been delaying their departure. It is, of course, not unusual that swallows of all kinds should be with us still at this time, but generally a certain large percentage has left us. The total numbers of the swallow kind that are visiting us may be, as all observers say, decreasing annually, but it is not often that we have had so many with us so late in the year.

## THE WILD HARE.

ABOUT a year ago you published two photographs of hares that I took, also a letter describing the circumstances under which they were obtained. I now propose to give you a letter in continuation of my observations taken at sundry times since then, these observations only referring to the months of August and September. On the estate to which I referred in my previous letter there is a large tract of sand-dunes, the greater portion of which is covered with a thick plantation of fir trees, from forty-five years of age and under. On the landward side of these sand-hills there is a stretch of reclaimed marsh, some half mile in width, and extending the whole extent of the sand-hills. The marsh is divided up into a number of large enclosures, by wire fences and drains, on which, during the months spoken of, a numerous stock of cattle, horses, and sheep feed. A good many hares find a secure retreat in the sand-hills during the daytime, and feed on the marshes in the morning and evening. It may perhaps be convenient to describe their general habits, starting from their return into the sand-hills in the morning. The hour at which most of them leave the marsh



Dr. F. Penrose.

THE STRETCH AFTER MIDDAY SIESTA.

Copyright.



Dr. F. Penrose.

FACING THE WIND.

Copyright.

varies, but it is any time before nine o'clock. All the hares, however, do not return, some preferring to lie out and make their forms in any standing clumps of grass, etc., in the enclosures. I found this out one day whilst sheltering amongst the fir trees from a downpour of rain. As soon as the rain got really heavy, one saw first one and then another hare appear, as it were, out of the ground in the middle of the fields and race for the shelter of the sand-hills. From one field I noticed no less than seven do this, having a short time previously spied this very ground and not been able to see one. It is wonderful how successful such large animals are in concealing themselves amongst even quite scanty herbage. Often, if unexpectedly disturbed whilst feeding out in the open, they have the power, as it were, of compressing themselves so closely to the ground that, without a careful scrutiny, one would either pass them by altogether or else mistake them for a lump of earth, etc. On their return to the hills in the morning, many of them take up their station on the sunny side of a fir tree, generally on a slope, and sit there, either amongst the fir needles or else on the bare ground or

sand, without any sort of form apparently. And there they sit and doze comfortably, looking quite large when you catch sight of them before they are aware of your presence, though even in these situations they are often very difficult to see, their coats assimilating so closely in colour to the pine needles or sand. They like a warm, sunny seat, out of the wind, or, in wet weather, sheltered from the rain. Here they sit and sleep, unless disturbed, until an hour or two past midday. At some time between half-past one and three o'clock they wake up and begin their toilet, which is a long and very careful process. I have seen them roll in the sand, then get up, shake themselves, and finally lick their bodies all over, for the most part directly with their tongues, but those parts of their bodies which they cannot reach so—*e.g.*, face, back of head, ears, and nape of neck—are dressed by the fore limbs exactly in the same way that a cat—the other pussy—does it. These toilet operations often take as long as half or three-quarters of an hour. When complete there is a short time of rest, then a long stretch and a yawn, fore legs first (as shown in the first illustration), then the hind legs; finally, the whole body is raised into an arch, after which the animal begins to move off for another feed. In this they vary



Dr. F. Penrose.

SUSPICIOUS (ONE POSITION).

Copyright.

was feeding stop, look up, and canter further away, when it has been out on the marsh, quite a hundred yards or more from the path in the wood along which I was walking. Their sense of hearing, and perhaps of appreciation of footfall, is also much less acute than that of the other game, as they will frequently allow one to pass within twenty yards, and go on feeding when it is getting dusk, in a way that no rabbit, pheasant, or partridge would do.

I have often thought that the hares here are unusually bright in colour. They vary, however, considerably. There are one or two light, pale fawn-coloured ones, looking almost white when feeding on the marsh. One of these is known to be now four years old, and its habits are very regular. It generally feeds in one field in the marsh, and goes to and from the sand-hills by one or other of two tracks. Though they have practically no enemies here, yet many die from fluke. I have never been able to learn whether a stoat will attack and kill a full-grown hare; certainly they will leverets, but I can get no positive evidence as to their ever attacking an adult. Your sportsmen readers will, perhaps, find this account very common-place, but in many parts of the country the brown hare is now a very rare animal, and there can be few places where they are so little disturbed as on this large and beautiful domain, where the opportunities for observation are exceptionally favourable.

F. G. PENROSE.



Dr. F. Penrose.

ANOTHER POSITION.

Copyright.

very much—some just shift a few yards and begin to nibble at the nearest bit of green, others go off slowly along their runs to the marshes and settle down steadily to their evening meal. On this estate, where they are only driven and shot at once or so in a season, where there are no foxes, and practically no enemies, but where they are constantly seeing men about, they are singularly tame.

I should range the protective value of their senses in the following order: First, and by far the most important, is their sense of smell. I remember one hare came slowly along a run and stopped within four or five yards of where I was standing against a fir tree, having apparently caught sight of something unusual; but after a good look it seemed satisfied and went on its way for another yard or two quite happily, until it got a whiff, when it made a startled jump, turned away at right angles, and was off at racing pace. If the keepers are rabbiting in the hills the hares are very unsettled, and keep away for a full third of a mile down wind. As long as one stands perfectly still I think their power of making out differences of colour, etc., is not at all acute (certainly far less than that of the rabbits, pheasants, and red-legged partridges, the other common occupants of the hills), but they appreciate movement very quickly, and I have often seen a hare that

## BOOKS OF THE WEEK.

FOR the materials of his new story Mr. Anthony Hope has not gone further than the society of to-day, and, indeed, for the purposes of a novel as distinguished from a romance, the world might be searched in vain for a better. Owing to a variety of reasons, modern life presents that



Dr. F. Penrose.

QUITE HAPPY.

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extraordinary jumble of classes and personages from which may be obtained the contrasts that are the very essence of fiction. The old aristocratic feudal class has been invaded, if not supplanted, by those who have amassed fortunes in the mercantile walks of life, and who have not yet learned to comport themselves harmoniously with the circle into which they have been introduced. In the introductory chapter of *A Servant of the Public* (Methuen) Mr. Hope says "it takes, they say, three generations to make a gentleman; the schools ticket them—national or board, commercial or grammar, Eton or Harrow." The prelude, in fact, leads us to expect a more intimate picture of the *nouveau riche* than is actually to be obtained from the subsequent pages. Sir James Maddock has made the ordinary progression in his ascent of gentility from Putney to Maida Vale, from Maida Vale to Paddington, from Paddington to Kensington Palace Gardens; but although we are given to understand that he is still far from being the finished article, Mr. Hope's invention has not been lively enough to endow him with the peculiarities that would have kept the fact before us. The business in which he has been engaged is alluded to in general terms as that of "selling ribbons"; but the fancy that a greater master of the craft than the author would have known how to make a more adroit use of these self-same ribbons. The only peculiarity of Sir James in connection with them is the mention, to the endless chagrin of his wife, of the fact in his nightly prayers that he has risen or been elevated from one class to another. Otherwise he is merely an inoffensive and amiable old gentleman, whose love of the business he has reared might *mutatis mutandis* be that of a country squire for his estate. Nor does this receive any compensation in the portraiture of his family. It is easy to imagine many droll scenes that might have occurred if Mr. Hope had been a little more liberal in his allotment of sons and daughters to the old gentleman. He might have given him two or three boys in cavalry regiments and two or three girls married, as they were almost sure

to be, to members of the aristocracy. Unfortunately for the reader, this aspect of his tale does not seem to have appealed much to the author, and he turns away from the possibilities it opens up of giving us a novel of manners to the study of an actress, an estray from Bohemia, who has made an ill-starred marriage, and in the absence of her husband flirts outrageously with the hero of the book and with others. We can see what the author seems to have aimed at, a light, gay, irresponsible, frivolous creature, with just that *soupeçon* of character which maintains her innocence. That is to say, she is deaf to the advances of all but one lover. In attempting to paint her, however, the novelist, in sporting language, appears to have been tried too high. We do not feel the charm with which he tries to invest her, and her conduct does not seem to us to differ either for better or worse from that of a thousand girls, who, placed before the public in a somewhat doubtful position, try to run with the hare and hunt with the hounds. That is to say, they seek the excitement of being fast without absolutely overstepping the bounds of propriety. One reader at least is bound to confess that Ora Pinsent is a puzzle to him. It was quite credible that in the heyday of her youth and foolishness she should unite herself with a man who had the makings of a sot in him, and as far as is apparent possessed no redeeming quality whatever. Many a beautiful and attractive woman has been so blind as to do that. It was also easily credible that she should fall in love with Ashley Mead; but that at the end such a woman, while her lover remained true to her, should marry an elderly business manager is a tax on credulity. It may be that we have missed some clue thrown out by Mr. Hope in the course of his narrative; but the final incident in Ora's life seems to reduce the whole drama to the most abject commonplace; yet if the conversation between her two discarded lovers, on page 361, has any meaning at all, it is that her fascination was something like that of Cleopatra, "age cannot wither her, nor custom stale her infinite variety." "A wonderful creature," thus in an apostrophe does our historian end; "or as Babba Flint had preferred to put it, 'a good sight.' Yes, that must be the way to look at her, the right way to look at her existence, the truth about it."

From this it is surely permissible to draw the inference that in his mind's eye Mr. Anthony Hope had one of those fair and light and whimsical women who have appeared no less in imaginative literature than in active life, and we may take it that to read the book according to the author's intent would be to consider its whole trend, its characters, and its inventions as so many devices to bring before us this conception. Others may, perhaps, find it in the pages, but we are afraid that the majority will fail to do so. A word should be said as to the manner of the narrator. The theme would have been suitable to Mr. Hope's lightest and brightest style; a breath of wit here, a touch of cynicism there, a greater readiness to laugh at the fantastic and the absurd, might well have helped him to make this a brilliant picture of the life of to-day; but he has chosen to deal too seriously with his people. Their loves and hates, if we may judge from the effect given to them, are almost gossamer in their lightness, but they are dealt with in a style so serious and heavy-handed that at times we are almost persuaded that Mr. Hope was meditating tragedy—a thing unthinkable.

An ancient and familiar bit of criticism tells us that Homer ever refrained from any set description of Helen of Troy, lest the impression he wished to create of her beauty might be marred by particular detail. Mr. Quiller-Couch has disregarded this precedent in his tale *Shakespeare's Christmas* (Smith, Elder), in which he brings the dramatist himself on the boards. However,

he puts more speech into the mouth of Shakespeare's father than into that of William himself, and on the whole, if we do not apply too critical and serious a test to it, the short tale is excellent fooling. In the second story of the odd half-dozen which make up the volume, Mr. Quiller-Couch, in our opinion, is much more successful. "Ye Sexes, Give Ear" is a tale, well conceived and well told, of a number of amazon fisherwomen, who quelled the men-folk in their neighbourhood by challenging them to a rowing match and winning,

the ground of offence being the singing of the old ballad which gives its name to the story, and particularly of the two verses:

"She was not took out of his head,  
To reign or to triumph o'er man;  
She was not took out of his feet,  
By man to be trampled upon.  
But she was took out of his side,  
His equal and partner to be:  
Though they be yunited in one,  
Still the man is the top of the tree!  
With my fol-de-rol, tooral-i-lay!"

These are the most characteristic contributions to the volume, and they show Mr. Quiller-Couch at his best. He is wonderfully clever in himself; he knows what good workmanship is, and has, we were going to say, so far as possible, mastered it himself. As a result, he gives us the short stories of one who is no amateur at writing. Yet they leave his limitation extremely well defined. He lacks just something of that sympathetic understanding which is required to make a writer of the first class, and in his work are visible too many evidences of the contemporary influences of his youth. To give a characteristic example of his work, we cannot do better than quote the passage showing how the fisherwomen treated a missionary who had the boldness to speak of the subjection of women:

"'Wrestlin' with 'em—that was one of your expressions—wrestlin' with our dear Cornish sisters!'

"In the spirit—a figure of speech," explained the poor man, snappy-like. Sal shook her head. "They know all about wrestlin' down yonder. I tell you, 'twon't do. You're a well-meaning man, no doubt; but you're terribly wrong on some points. You'd do an amazing amount of mischief if we let you run loose. But we couldn't take no such responsibility—indeed we couldn't; and the long and short of it is, you've got to go."

She spoke these last words very firmly. The preacher flung a glance round and saw he was in a trap.

"Such shameless behaviour—" he began.

"You've got to go back," repeated Sally, nodding her head at him. "Take my advice, and go quiet."



Dr. F. Penrose.

THE WILD HARE: ON THE ALERT.

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'I can only suppose you to be intoxicated,' said he, and swung round upon the path where Thomasine Oliver stood guard. 'Allow me to pass, Madam, if you please!'

But here the mischief put it into Long Eliza to give his hat a flip by the brim. It dropped over his nose, and rolled away in the grass. 'Oh, what a dear little bald head!' cried Long Eliza; 'I declare I must kiss it, or die!' She caught up a handful of hay as he stooped, and—well, well, Sir! Scandalous, as you say! Not a word beyond this would any of them tell; but I do believe the whole gang rolled the poor man in the hay, and took a kiss off him—'making sweet hay,' as 'tis called. 'Twas only known that he paid the bill for his lodging a little after dawn next morning, took up

his bag, and passed down Fore Street towards the quay. Maybe a boat was waiting for him there; at all events, he was never seen again—not on this side of Tamar.

Sal went back, composed as you please, and let herself in by the front door. In the parlour she found her man still seated in the easy-chair and smoking, but sulky-like, and with most of his monkey-temper leaked out of him.

'Wnat have you been doin', pray?' asks he.

Sal looked at him with a twinkle. 'Kissin',' says she, untying her bonnet; and with that down she dropped on a chair and laughed till her sides ached."

## FROM THE FARMS.

### THE YIELD OF HAY.

NOW that the hay is all in stacks it has become possible to form a fair estimate of the produce of the year, and the process has not been altogether a pleasant one, as the yield per acre is considerably lower than it was in the three previous years. It is said to be about 22cwt. over the whole of Great Britain. In Wales the average is about 1cwt. lower, but the Scotch estimate is somewhat higher, only the quantity of hay grown in Scotland is, comparatively speaking, so small that it does not affect the result very much. The average yield, therefore, is about 24cwt. an acre, which must be rather good news to those Scottish farmers who go in for this form of cultivation. Most of the hay, we are glad to know, has been got in in good condition, though much of that which was cut at first was damaged by the rainy weather. The question is how much old hay is still left in the hands of the farmers, and on this point even the roughest estimate is scarcely possible, as no return is made on which to base calculations. However, it may be assumed that the stock is considerably less than it was this time twelve months ago, and possibly enough it may come very near exhaustion towards the end of the year.

### STORING TURNIPS.

Very soon this will be a task waiting to be performed, and this year, when the hay crop is rather short, it is pretty evident that graziers will have to depend on their roots during a great part of the winter. It is essential, therefore, that they should be carefully stored, and the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries has issued a timely leaflet explaining the best method of doing so. The ordinary ways are pretty well known. You can put your turnips in large heaps, which may be as long and broad as you like, but not over 3½ ft. in depth. The sides are covered by some 12 in. of straw overlaid by 4 in. of soil on the sides exposed to the prevailing winds, though 3 in. of soil will suffice on the other sides.

The top of the heap is covered by 6 in. of straw kept in position by poles, branches, etc. Old straw ropes removed from stacks that have been thatched may be usefully thrown over the straw. Soil should not be spread over the top of it, as it gets washed through the roots and dirties them. Another way to store turnips is in oblong heaps like large potato pits or clamps. They are also stored in small heaps equally distributed over the field in which they are grown. The writer of the pamphlet says laying two rows in one, and ploughing in, is an excellent method of storing roots on light dry land. Under this system the roots are not only well protected, but they are also placed under conditions that admit of their growing considerably if the winter is mild. If the labour is scarce, or work is pressing, considerable protection may be given to growing roots by merely running the double mould-board ridging plough between the rows. The following list of points to be observed in storing turnips is given:

(a) A dry open situation should be selected on which to place the heaps. Although proximity to a wood or hedge may secure shelter from cold wind, roots often keep much worse under such circumstances than in an open exposed place.

(b) The roots should be dry and clean when carted. If topped and tailed, the operation should be conducted so as to injure the bulb as little as possible.

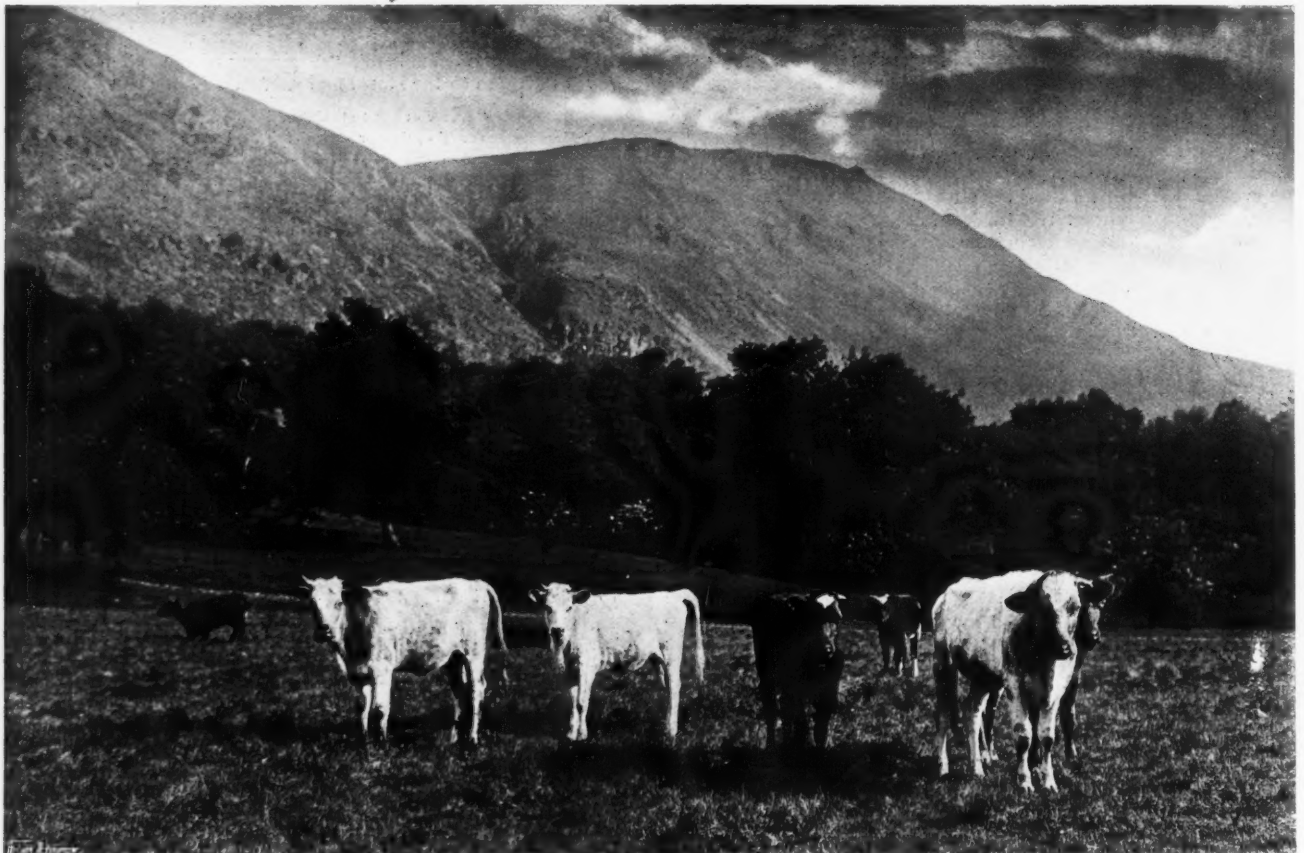
(c) The turnips should be well matured before storing. This is indicated by the lower leaves being yellow.

(d) It is a good plan, weather permitting, to leave the roots lying in the field, after topping and tailing, for three or four days before carting. This hardens the skin, and brings them into better condition for storing.

(e) Unless frost threatens, soil should not be put on the heaps for at least a week after the roots are carted. This permits of the circulation of air and escape of moisture.

### BORDER FARMING IN AUGUST.

August, the king of months in the country, has gone, but is not forgotten. It will long be remembered with very kindly



feelings by Border farmers. By a happy combination of rains and heat the past month has changed farming prospects from very bad to nearly average. Owing to June and July being such hot, rainless months, harvest was begun exceptionally early in the Border districts this year, many farmers commencing to cut three weeks sooner than usual. In consequence the corn is now nearly all "led," which is just as well, considering the broken weather we are having at present. Crops, on the whole, have cut up better than was expected, although still slightly below an average. Wheat, which is more freely grown than it was a few

years ago, was this year a very heavy crop. Generally its yield on the Border is light, but this has been an ideal wheat season. Barley cut up a pretty good crop of splendid quality, and has been stacked in fine condition. The oat crop is the worst, as is always the case in a dry year. The grain is light and the straw very short. Now that the corn is cut one can judge the seed "takes" better, and in most cases they are very poor. In fact, in many places where there was no rain for weeks after they were sown they failed to germinate at all. Although pastures have improved during the last month, it is feared lambs will suffer for want of good "seeds," especially if we have a bad autumn. Anyone going round a number of Border arable farms would be at once struck with the difference in the turnip crops, even on neighbouring farms. The truth is, in a dry season like the present has been, turnips are a very hard crop to grow, and it is only the best farmers—the farmers who work their land thoroughly and manure it well—who have good crops this year. The lamb sales on the Border have been a very pleasant surprise. Farmers expected a fall from last year's prices, but instead of that there has been a rise, both in "in-bye" breeds and

Cheviots. The wool sales have also been very good, a rise of 2s. to 3s. per stone of 24lb. having been obtained over last year's prices. Owing to last season's good turnip crop and fine open winter, the quality of the wool was much above an average. August is one of the four months of the year in which a very interesting gathering takes place on Cheviot. Cheviot and black-faced sheep are very fine athletes, and roving spirits

frequently leave their companions, and, surmounting with ease any obstacles that may be in their way, join a flock belonging to another farmer. Certain days are fixed by the surrounding shepherds, who congregate on Cheviot, bringing these stragglers, and return them to their rightful owners.

#### PIGEON-KEEPING BY SMALL HOLDERS.

In the August number of the Journal of the Board of Agriculture Mr. H. de Courcy writes an article recommending that small holders and cottagers should try to keep pigeons

for profit. He does not mean fancy pigeons, but birds that can be used for the production of squabs for the market. He considers that the industry is fairly comparable to those of rabbit-breeding and bee-keeping, and a point in its favour is that it does not require much labour, while the initial outlay of capital is inconsiderable. Those who begin the business should recognise at the outset that the demand is for large squabs, in other words, an 8lb. squab, which means that they should weigh 8lb. per dozen dead weight. The breed which the writer found to do this most effectually was the ordinary Homer; the yearly produce of ten pairs of Homers was sold at a higher price than the produce of an equal number of any other kind of pigeon. He found that Homers made eight or ten nests of young in the year when proper care was taken of them, and he could get up the weight of 8lb. per dozen when the squabs were only four weeks old. Runts and Dragoons will weigh over 9lb. a dozen, but they are not ready for killing until about five weeks old. Mr. de Courcy gives very simple and clear directions about mating pigeons, in which the important point is to keep the



B. C. Wickison.

AN ESSEX PASTORAL.

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loft clear of unmated birds, either male or female, as otherwise the cocks will fight and throw out of the nest eggs, and even squabs, while the females will lay infertile eggs and try to sit where they are not wanted. His advice about feeding is most practical, as is also that about building lofts for the birds. In fact, those who wish to begin this industry can scarcely do better than take Mr. de Courcy for a guide.



## RE BIRDS AND FRUIT.

The following communication has been forwarded to the editor by Mr. John Riley, President of the Hereford Fruit-growers' Association, who writes from experience: "In your issue of August 26th I see you ask for the opinion of those who cultivate fruit for profit. Here in this woodland district, where naturally birds are plentiful, I grow nearly a hundred acres of fruit on cultivated ground—apples, plums, black and, till lately, red currants, gooseberries, and strawberries. Birds have increased enormously of late, and they seem all to come here. I used to try scaring only, boys with clappers, and men firing guns, but it is now quite useless; the birds take no notice whatever of such noises, merely flying a few yards, and proceeding to the work of destruction again. Bullfinches and blackbirds are the worst. I have had considerably over £200 damage done by them in a year. I was obliged to grub up my red currants, as they ate nearly half of them, and in one year destroyed over £100 worth. I have seen quite 150 blackbirds come out of a patch of ripe Warrington gooseberries of four acres. We drive them over the guns systematically, as in partridge-driving, and kill quite 1,000 blackbirds in a season, with apparently no diminution the next season. Over 100 bullfinches are generally killed in the winter. Nothing but shooting is of the slightest use. I may say, in regard to water, that where the blackbirds are most destructive there is a brook in the next field and pools all round. The fact is, we have had such mild winters that the birds have increased beyond the numbers their natural food will support. One rarely used to see apples damaged, but now there is scarcely a tree but has apples damaged so as to be unsaleable. No one is more fond of birds than I am, but such losses force one to lessen the depredators."

## IN THE GARDEN.

## THE JAPANESE MAPLES (ACERS).

**A** PAMPHLET sent to us by Messrs. James Veitch and Sons, Limited, of the Royal Nurseries, Chelsea, is of exceptional interest, as it deals with the beautiful Far Eastern Maples, which are now assuming their most brilliant colouring in the garden. Many of the newer introductions are illustrated, and all are described, by a member of the firm, Mr. James H. Veitch, whose knowledge of the various species and varieties in their own country is imparted in the booklet. The following hints on their culture and the place for them in the woodland are useful, and may well be reproduced: "Although over forty years have passed since my firm introduced the first batch of *Acer* (polymorphum) palmatum varieties, judging from the paucity of good specimens found in gardens, it does not appear that the many fine forms are sufficiently appreciated, due



THE BLUE WATER-LILIES.

possibly to a mistaken idea that they are not hardy in this country—a fear justified when the plants were newly introduced, but now untenable. The experience at Combe Wood, and in many gardens in various parts of the country, has placed it beyond doubt that the Japanese Maples are hardy in Great Britain, although of slow growth. They are also hardy in America, and are grown in large quantities in the neighbourhood of New York and Boston, where the winters surpass in severity those experienced in these islands, and where also the bright sunshine of the summer months gives to the foliage a brilliance we cannot hope to rival. Not the least of the attractions of this great group are many of the forms of *Acer palmatum* and *A. japonicum*, low-growing, round-headed bushes, or small trees, with slender, twiggy growths, almost entirely hidden by a wealth of foliage of the most variable form. Of colour they have a range such as no other deciduous tree possesses, from soft pale green, through golden yellow, to bright crimson, claret red, and deep blackish purple. In the matter of culture the Japanese

Maples are by no means exacting, given a soil sufficiently deep to afford a sure supply of moisture during periods of drought, and a position sheltered from the north and east winds, always liable to injure the tender foliage in spring and spoil the symmetry of the tree by bending or checking the growth of the branches. Some of the varieties with finely-cut foliage are eminently suited to pot culture, and in early spring their delicate frond-like leaves are an admirable contrast to flowering plants; but it is by no means necessary to restrict their culture to pots in glasshouses, as they are as much at home and quite as hardy as the broad-leaved forms in the open garden. The very dwarf varieties are admirable subjects for rockeries. Where colour schemes as to foliage are attempted, the various forms of Japanese Maples are invaluable, and clumps of one kind, or two or three varieties with colours harmoniously blended, afford a very pleasing feature in early spring, enduring longer than our most persistent flowering shrubs. This sums up very well the treatment of these beautiful Maples.

## THE BLUE WATER-LILIES.

The forms of the Eastern Water-lily (*Nymphaea stellata* and *N. zanzibarensis*) give a new joy to the garden, but they are not hardy. It is necessary to warm the water artificially by passing hot-water pipes through it, but when this is done the results are as shown in the illustration. The flowers are blue of various shades, varying from deep violet to the colour of the Forget-me-not.

## RANDOM NOTES.

**Hints on Wall Plants.**—We were reading a short time ago some excellent notes on the wall garden in August, by an authority upon this interesting subject, Mr. F. W. Meyer, and as wall gardening is now taking its place with the rock and water garden in English horticulture, these notes will be useful. We are writing now of almost the duldest season of the year for wall gardening—the end of July and the month of August. Although few plants may be in bloom there is plenty of work to be done. Now is a good time to divide plants which have finished blooming, and to prick them out into crevices of the wall with a view to having them established before winter sets in. Seeds, too, of such varieties as are easily propagated in this way may now be sown direct into the crevices. To accomplish this successfully it will in most cases be necessary to insert into the crevices small wedge-shaped pieces of stone, driving them in with a mallet or hammer, so as to form a foundation for soil in which to sow or plant. After sowing, more soil and more wedge-shaped stones may be rammed into the crevices. Probably some of the seed so sown will not germinate till the spring. Plants in pots should not be planted in the wall garden until September.

**A New Vine.**—When looking through the list of new plants sent by Messrs. James Veitch and Sons, Limited, Chelsea, and introduced by them through their collector, Mr. E. H. Wilson, from China, we noticed particularly a new Vine, known as *Vitis henryana*. We have not seen this beautiful novelty, but from the illustrations of it there is no doubt that it is an acquisition to the many Vines that are welcomed for their noble foliage and autumn colouring. The following is the description given: "A very pretty Chinese species, named in compliment to Dr. Augustine Henry, by whom it was discovered. For its introduction to cultivation we are indebted to our collector, E. H. Wilson, who sent seeds of it from the Province of Hupeh, Central China. The leaves are digitate, composed of five lanceolate leaflets with serrate margins, and measuring about 3 in. in length by about 1 in. in diameter. They are effectively variegated along the midrib and principal veins with silvery white and rose, the ground colour being dark velvety green; this variegation, constant all through the summer, is more pronounced in autumn months, when the green ground colour gives place to a rich tint of red. This Vine is an elegant and graceful plant, and admirably adapted for clothing trellises and pergolas, or rough poles in the herbaceous border."

**The Loganberry.**—We have been asked to add to our remarks in a recent number about the Loganberry, which it appears is becoming much better known. Many gardeners, however, have yet to grow it, and until they do so, they are without one of the most important fruits that have been raised in recent years. It is quite a break away, and now that it has come we wonder why years ago the idea of crossing the Blackberry and Raspberry never occurred to the hybridist. As the planting season is approaching, this note is opportune, also the following letter, from one of the first growers of the Loganberry in this country, in which are valuable hints for its cultivation: "The fruits are produced in clusters, and closely resemble a

large Raspberry in size, but the colour is that of a Blackberry. The fruits when ripe are firmer than those of a Blackberry, and are more acid in flavour. The latter point is a great gain, as it is so much better for preserves. I am not at all sure that many persons would call it a good dessert fruit, on account of its brisk and acid flavour. For my own part, I think ripe fruits are delicious. It is an American introduction, and was named the Logan after the raiser, Judge Logan. The culture of this fruit is very simple. There is no need to grow it against a wall, as the plants are quite as good in the open, but need space."

**The Water-lily Disease.**—We hear grievous complaints of the *Nymphaea* disease, which has almost ruined many beautiful collections. Several correspondents have sent leaves to us during the past few weeks, and their sorry condition is evidently due to the ravages of a fly. M. Latour-Marliac, who has raised many of the most splendid of the hybrids, writes: "I have only had to complain seriously of the ravages committed by two



kinds of larvæ, the one black and the other white, produced by certain small yellowish white butterflies, which deposit their eggs on the floating leaves. These larvæ, at first almost invisible, grow to the thickness of a Wheat straw, and devour the leaves of the Nymphæas during the night. They are very clever in hiding themselves during the day, laying fragments of the leaves on their bodies and covering themselves up with pieces of Lemna or Azolla. Their devastation would be serious if it could not be easily stopped by pouring on the surface of the water some drops of a mixture of three-quarters colza oil to one quart of paraffin, a sufficient dose to poison and destroy them without hurting the plants." We should much like to know whether any of our readers have tried different remedies to this, and with what result.

*Messrs. Kelway's New Gladioli*—A wonderful display of Gladioli was made by Messrs. Kelway and Son of Langport at a recent meeting of the Royal Horticultural Society, and among the novelties shown by them two received the award of merit. One is named French Fleet, which is evidently

of the Nanceianus type, the strong spike having flowers of intensely rich colouring, salmon being the prevailing shade, but on the lower segments this is almost hidden with deep velvety crimson maroon blotches. It is a distinct break and most welcome. Peace Envoy is another beautiful flower of very large size and soft colouring, the broad segments being almost pure white, with a stain of tender hue at the base.

*Montbretia Prometheus*.—Some of the most beautiful Montbretias that we have seen have been shown this year, and it is a happy circumstance that this hardy and easily-grown race of plants should have been taken in hand by the hybridist and improved upon. The most striking so far is called Prometheus, which was raised by Mr. G. Davison, gardener to Lord Petre, whose gardens are full of interesting hardy plants. The plant is tall and strong in growth, and the deep orange-coloured flowers are no less than 3in. across, with a crimson circle at the base of the segments. The Montbretia enjoys a warm sunny border and a moderately light soil.

## THE HERDSMAN.

NO calling sounds more pleasantly to the ear than that of the herdsman. The very name of shepherd brings with it a freshness of spring meadows; a wind blowing from close cropped sheep-walks on

"swelling downs, where sweet air stirs  
Blue harebells lightly, and where prickly furze  
Buds lavish gold";

a gleam of lithe-limbed boys, fluting Arcadian melodies in the noon-tide silence of Sicilian olive groves; and a no less fragrant if quite other recollection of the fancies of a later age, when our shepherds wore flowered waistcoats and knee-breeches, keeping their sheep in green Watteau glades, down which shepherdesses tripped, with ribbon'd crook and high-heeled shoes, singing elaborate verses in praise of the Pastoral Life.

The shepherd's calling began with man's first roving on Mother Earth, and shall perchance survive when the scientist and the inventor have completed their spoliation of her green and pleasant places. With what a sense of pastoral stability, of the leisurely pursuing of tasks already old as the hills, and to be handed on to infinite generations of herdsmen, do the Egyptian shepherds move before us. From one of the Gizeh tombs, dated 3000 B.C., we may watch the long pro-



SHEPHERDS FROM AN ANCIENT MISSAL.

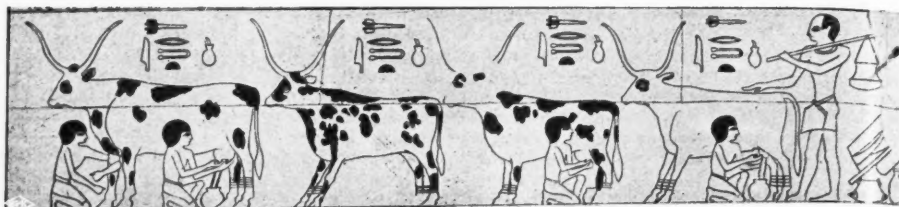


THE MEDIEVAL SHEPHERD.

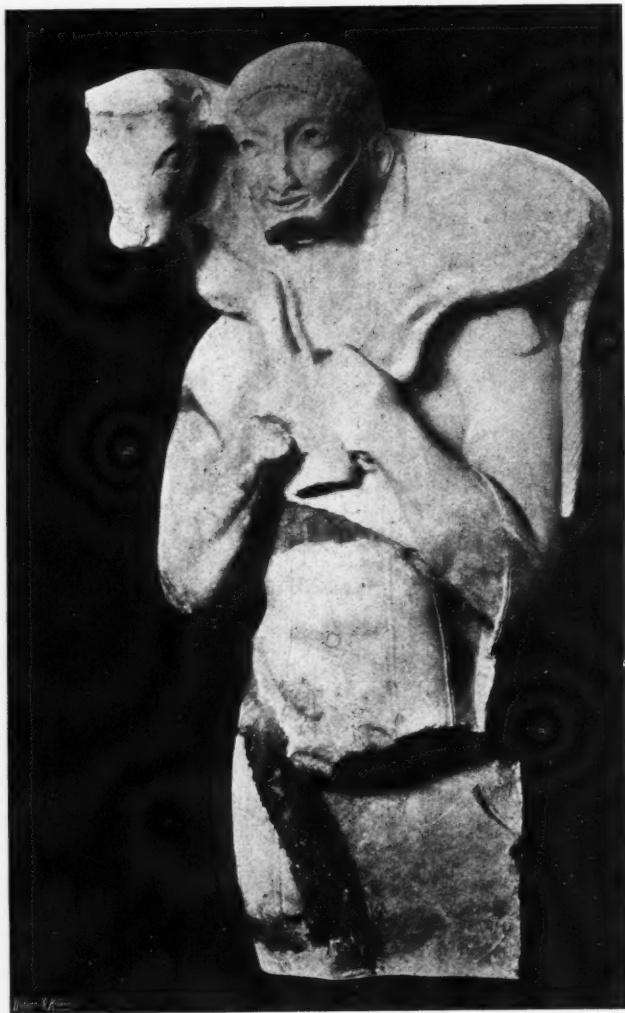
cession of the herds of some wealthy owner, driven by the herdsmen, and numbered each after their kind. First come the oxen 834, then 220 cows, goats over 300, asses 760, and nearly 1,000 sheep. On the left of the picture the steward, leaning on his staff and accompanied by his dog, receives the report from the head-shepherd. The master of the estate meanwhile watches all his wealth of "herds and sheep thick of fleece." This pastoral is hewn in the living rock near the Gizeh tombs, the royal grave it decorates bearing the name of a king who ruled in days near to those of the founders of the pyramids; from so remote an age does the placid Egyptian herdsman, truly a "foster-child of silence and slow time," stand yet vividly before us. We may see such another ancient herdsman in those most delicate of all early reliefs, the decorations of the pyramids of Sakhara; here the cowman is at work on his milking-stool, producing streams that, for volume, make good comparison with the yield from his brother shepherd's flocks, those Egyptian shepherds who, according to Diodorus, contrived two lambing and two shearing seasons in one year. The Egyptian herdsman lived in simple wise, in huts made of reeds, and it is interesting to note that such reed-huts are, in our own time, still in use among the Ababdeh tribe, a pastoral race of the Upper Thebaid. The pastoral life of Egypt is, perhaps, a little oppressive

with its opulence, its numbered herds, its overseers and stewards, its reports and tablets. It is a freer air that we breathe in the vales of "many fountained Arcadia, the mother of sheep," or on the mountain slopes of Latmos, among flocks guarded by swift-footed Hermes, god of shepherds, and, withal, first of cattle-lifters; by bright-haired Apollo, god, too, of flocks and herds; by Pan, "the pastoral god of the long wild hair." The tale of Hermes' cattle-thieving from the flocks of Apollo is told for all time in the Homeric Hymn dedicated to that guileful god. Here we learn how, born in the dawn, the child Hermes was a skilful

harper by midday, and in the evening, lo, he stole the deathless kine of Apollo. Fifty kine did the day-old Hermes cut off, driving them hither and thither; and, mindful of his cunning, he confused the hoof marks, the front behind, the hind in front, and for himself he wore sandals, with bundles of fresh young brushwood beneath his feet, leaves and all. So he drove on the sturdy herds of Apollo over many a shadowy hill and through flowering plains; and into a byre he herded them, munching lotus and dewy marsh-marigold. But at dawn he quickly came back to his cradle and wrapped the swaddling clothes about his shoulders like a witless babe. Then was Apollo aware of the theft of his kine, and he sped to the cave where was Hermes born; there was a sweet fragrance spread and many tall sheep were grazing the grass. But Hermes feigned sweet sleep, a little babe all wrapt in cunning wiles. And he answered Apollo: "Yesterday I was born, my feet are tender, and rough is the earth below." But Apollo, lightly laughing, made answer: "Oh thou rogue, . . . many herdsmen of the steadings wilt thou vex in the mountain glens," and threatened the child. So Hermes appealed to Father Zeus; and Zeus laughed aloud at his cunning pleading, and bade them both to be of one mind. Then the twain sped to the fields, and Hermes disclosed the hiding-place of his booty, and the anger of Apollo he stayed with wondrous music on his lyre, lightly soothing him inasmuch that Prince Apollo spake: "Thou crafty slayer of kine, thy song is worth fifty oxen. . . . What art is this, what charm against the stress of cares, verily here is a



EGYPTIAN COWMEN, 3300 B.C.



HERMES CARRYING A CALF.

choice of all three things, joy and love and sleep." So Hermes gave him his lyre and taught him to play thereon; and Phœbus Apollo pledged his shining whip in the hands of Hermes, and set

him over the herds; and bade him that "the cattle of the field with twisted horn do thou tend, and be lord over sheep that the wide earth nourishes, and over all flocks be glorious Hermes lord."

In what a joyous childhood of the world did men weave such tales as these of the laughing youth of the gods; of childish trickery played with lowing herds in flower-covered meadows; of the brother gods' estrangement and reconciliation by help of sweet music; of the adjustment of each to diverse cares, the elder to know the secret counsel of Zeus and give oracles to men, the younger to guard the sturdy kine and white-fleeced sheep, Hermes the herdsman and, withal, inventor of the shepherd's flute. In a primitive Greek vase painting we may see Hermes practising his pastoral function as he guides four sheep towards rocky pastures; and in a later vase of the fifth century B.C. Apollo himself guides four oxen with a long twisted staff. That freshness of dawn and clear air, that joyous delight in life, that scent of flowers and sweet breath of cattle, that grace "such as morning meadows wear" of this old Greek hymn, is surely of the very essence of the true pastoral. Is it not the note that meets us again centuries later in the Idylls of Theocritus, when he tells us how

"Menalcas met, while pasturing his sheep,  
The cowherd Daphnis on the high-land steep;  
Both yellow-tressed, and in their life's fresh spring,  
Both skilled to play the pipe, and both to sing,"

and forthwith relates the shepherds' contest in rivalry of song; their prize, a nine-toned pipe; their judge, a passing goatherd shepherding his white kids. The pastoral serenity and peace is pictured again, yet another two centuries later. In Virgil's eclogues the blithe Greek spirit is not yet dead; still may his shepherd

"Tityrus, at ease carelessly laid  
In covert of a beech tree's ample shade,  
Muse on a slender oat the rustic lay. . . ."

Still may he

" . . . the vacant summer hours beguile  
Making the woods, and all the upland ground  
With lovely Amaryllis' name resound."

With the Christian Era the shepherd becomes, in many a missal and exquisite mediæval illumination, the watcher and attendant of the Nativity; but a strangely aged and sober shepherd, with patient, careworn face, as though the ascetic strife with existence had invaded even the sheepfold. In two



EARLY GREEK PASTORAL.



lovely pages from a "Horæ of the Blessed Virgin Mary," now in the British Museum, we have the vision of the Nativity appearing to the shepherds in their fields, and their adoration at the Manger at Bethlehem. On a hillside, strewn with flowers and white with sheep, are three shepherds, with crook and pipe, raising gentle wondering faces to the sky, their dog equally intent on the heavenly vision; above them appear two angels bearing the scroll "Gloria in Altissimi Deo"; a quaint, sad shepherdess sitting the while unconcerned, with face turned earthwards, feeding a lamb—a very Martha among shepherdesses. In the later scene at the Manger we have the same lovely detail of flower and grass, the same joint presence of beast and man at the Nativity. Four shepherds, again with crook and pipe and dog, adore the infant Christ, and also two shepherdesses, one of whom brings in her arms a lamb, the other offers an apple. In the border to this page the monkish fancy goes indeed a-maying among the shepherd folk; in intricate foliage shepherds and shepherdesses climb, and play on rustic bagpipes, and frankly go courting, their sheep the while discreetly feeding in the background. For centuries the shepherd kept his place in the forefront of the scenes of the Nativity, for in some parts of France until 100 years ago the midnight Christmas Mass was known as "The Shepherds' Mass," and was accompanied by processions of shepherds and shepherdesses, the sound of pipes and musettes, and the presence among the congregation of sheep or lambs.

The Renaissance shepherd and his followers enter a land all unknown to their classic prototypes. We are told how in the great Arcadian pastorals of the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries the shepherds are shepherd errants, knights in smock and sandals, and yet how the spirit of pastoralism is at home in those interminable romances. In this Arcadian fiction, the Arcadia of Sir Philip Sidney, and of many others, the story goes with pastoral leisure, and "summer days stretch themselves out with indefinite extension," the storms do not blow too roughly, the leaves are not scattered, everywhere is sweetness, melody, gaiety, and if simplicity has "in some sort gone astray, yet there is some delicate flavour of homeliness imparted to high courtesies, as of high courtesy to things homely, which makes mower and reaper, princess-shepherdesses and dairymaids of blood-royal, akin each to the other, and yet removes neither wholly from their own human sphere." What could be more charming, or more leisurely, than the tale in Sir Philip Sidney's "Arcadia" of the wooing and marriage of Thyrsis—Thyrsis, who, "not with painted words nor falsified promises," won the consent of his beloved, but in truth and simplicity, and "giving her such pretty presents as neither could wearie him with the giving, nor shame her for the taking." The first strawberries, poesies of spring flowers "wrapt up in a little greene silk," his sweetest cream, the "best cakebread his mother made," these were Thyrsis' gifts. And when his shepherdess came to visit him, "how the house was swept"; and when dancing about the maypole no one taken out but she, and he would frame all his dancing only to grace her. In the wool of her favoured lamb he would enwrap his verses, "making the innocent beast his unweeting messenger."

What a charming picture the great Elizabethan gives us of his village Arcady; how sure we feel that the lives of this shepherd and shepherdess



ROMAN SHEPHERD BOY.

in which his poems are so rich. Their value increases for us, because it is useless to shut our eyes to the fact that they preserve an aspect of English landscape which is rapidly passing away. The landscape which inspired "The Miller's Daughter," "The Brook," "Enoch Arden," "The Palace of Art," "The Gardener's Daughter," and provided illustration for nearly every piece with an English setting that Tennyson ever wrote, was eminently the landscape of the pre-railway and pre-industrial era. It is true that the greater portion of his work was written and published later, but it is true also that he spent his impressionable years, and formed his mental images of the country, in times when

industrial influences had had little effect upon landscape. In Tennyson's youth the cottages of a countryside were as much a product of the district as the trees or the flowers, and the harmony of any locality was seldom broken by the introduction of an alien material as the result of the facility of communication which came with railways.

Without railing against the new order of things, which has its own great merits and advantages, we may at least be happy in the possession of those verbal pictures by Tennyson of the landscape of a simpler period, pictures, too, in a medium which suggests as well as defines, and preserves the flavour of the subject more completely than is possible by graphic art alone. The same faculty, of course, is possessed by most of the great English poets—by Shakespeare, Milton, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Keats, and Shelley, to name only the chief; but in few of these, as it seems to me, is the typically English character of the landscape so apparent, or the pictorial quality of its presentation so complete. There is a minuteness without labour in Tennyson which we get in no other poet, and a choice of epithet as perfect as that of Shakespeare himself. The line in "Aylmer's Field" which describes the rabbit as fondling his

of Sidney's fancy will pass in pleasant places, places where one may

"sit upon the rocks  
And see the shepherds feed their flocks  
By shallow rivers, to whose falls  
Melodious birds sing madrigals."

Much of the romance of Arcadian life, its outward setting of flute and crook, its pastoral songs, have, with Strephon and Amaryllis, passed away. Still, for the shepherd of to-day, there is the excellence of a calling pursued on hill-sides and in green meadows, untainted by the clamour and smoke of cities. For him there is yet the leading of the flocks to grass wet with morning dew, the long days in the open, the spring activities of the lambing, the summer shearing-time. He, truly, is reft of pipes and rebeck, slashed hose and flowered waistcoat are not for him, neither the goat-skin flying over bare brown limbs of his Greek ancestor, but the love of the life under open skies, of the flocks dependent on his skill, may link him in bonds of craft-brotherhood with shepherds of all centuries.

G. M. GODDEN.

## THE COUNTRY IN TENNYSON.

AMONG those qualities which united to secure for Tennyson a place among the greatest of our poets is one for which all lovers of the country must become increasingly grateful year by year. I mean that faculty of vision and power of expression which enabled him to preserve for us those matchless vignettes of English scenery



EGYPTIAN HERDSMEN.



"harmless face" is as true and as happy as Oberon's "nodding violet." Above all, the country he describes is an old and peaceful country, the "haunt of ancient peace," the country of an old civilisation in which the tumult of war has been long forgotten, a land of cultivated field, elm-shaded lane, of wild flower, rich meadow, and sleek cattle:

"A land of hops and poppy-mingled corn,  
Little about it stirring but a brook,  
A sleepy land where under the same wheel  
The same old rut would deepen year by year."

Luckily, however, there are some features of English landscape which are fairly permanent, and if we wander away from railway stations and high roads, and can shut our eyes to the distressing appearance of corrugated iron, we may still find many of the scenes which inspired the finest of Tennyson's descriptive work. There is little need to pick and choose among his poems for passages to illustrate that quality of his genius. One turns naturally to the early and middle periods for the most vivid expression of his love and appreciation of the country; but it is of no consequence which volume we open. The poet received his impressions as boy and young man in an England the outward aspect of which dominated his expression to the end. At this time of the year one thinks naturally of the summer, and where is the opening of that season in a cultivated country better presented than in these lines:

"all the land in flowery squares  
Beneath a broad and equal blowing wind  
Smelt of the coming summer, as one large cloud  
Drew downward,"

or

"to left and right  
The cuckoo told his name to all the hills,  
The mellow ouzel fluted in the elm?"

Tennyson again deals very delicately with those typical features of English rural scenery, the field-path and the hedgerow. Here, for example, is a picture familiar to all who know the country in summer:

"the steer forgot to graze,  
And where the hedgerow cuts the pathway stood  
Lesning his horn into the neighbour field  
And lowing to his fellows."

It seems impossible to imagine a more tender rendering of that strange sense, half hearing, half feeling, which we all experience unconsciously at times, than in the following lines from "The Brook." Here is a picture of the Anglo-Indian exile revisiting the scenes of his youth and sitting on a stile in a meadow in an English June:

"on a sudden a low breath  
Of tender air made tremble in the hedge,  
The fragile bindweed bells and briony rings,  
And he looked up. There stood a maiden near  
Waiting to pass."

The English meadow indeed is incomparably treated by Tennyson. Who that knows the old English farm in a Southern County near running water, with its wild growth of damp-loving plants in shady meadows near the stream, can fail to recognise the perfection of this passage:

"And even while she spoke, I saw where James  
Made towards us like a wader in the surf  
Beyond the brook, waist deep in meadow sweet?"

The whole poem of "The Brook" is redolent of some of the most lovely aspects of English scenery. The way in which the blank verse is broken by the lyric in snatches is admirable in its artistry, and the quality of that lyric as a presentation of a typical English stream is perhaps only equalled by Shakespeare's:

"He makes sweet music with the enamell'd stones,  
Giving a gentle kiss to every sedge  
He overtaketh in his pilgrimage."

Or Coleridge's haunting lines:

"like a leafy brook in June  
Which to the sleeping woods at night  
Singeth a quiet tune."

"The Miller's Daughter" is full of the same scenery. The old English mill and its environment is preserved as long as the language lasts in lines like these:

"I loved the brimming wave that swam  
Thro' quiet meadows round the mill,  
The sleepy pool above the dam,  
The pool beneath it never still;  
The meal sacks on the whitened floor,  
The dark round of the dripping wheel,  
The very air about the door  
Made misty with the floating meal."

It is characteristic of Tennyson's landscape that it is typical. We can seldom lay our finger on a passage and say this describes such and such a place or such and such a river; the district, perhaps a particular county, is suggested, never a particular spot. These lines from "The Palace of Art" may have been inspired by Trent or Ouse, certainly by the river and sky scenery of the

eastern Midlands, and the least observant would never apply them to Thames, Avon, or Severn:

"And one a full-fed river winding slow  
By herds upon an endless plain,  
The ragged rims of thunder brooding low  
With shadow streaks of rain."

So, too, in "The Gardener's Daughter" is a matchless picture of an English provincial town which certainly does not represent Salisbury or Winchester or Canterbury, but yet represents them all, and a score of other quiet places like Christchurch or Romsey, which exhale that nameless flavour of ancient building, ecclesiastical tradition, peaceful meadow, and placid stream:

"News from the humming city comes to it  
In sound of funeral or of marriage bells,  
And sitting muffled in dark leaves you hear  
The windy clangour of the minster clock,  
Although between it and the garden lies  
A league of grass washed by a slow broad stream,  
That stir'd with languid pulses of the oar,  
Waves all its lazy lilies and creeps on  
Barge-laden to three arches of a bridge  
Crown'd with the minster towers."

One could fill many papers such as this with Tennyson's finished pictures of English landscape; every volume of his poems is full of smaller touches which display the same felicity of expression and perfection of finish. What could be better than the line in the description of a rural fête in a gentleman's park in the prologue to "The Princess," where "Babies roll about like tumbled fruit in grass"; the close observation which appears in "A shout again arose and made The long line of the approaching rookery swerve," or the vivid lines, "And shone far off as shines A field of charlock in the sudden sun"; or, "tremulous aspen trees And poplars made a noise of falling showers"; or that South Country vignette, "The white chalk quarry from the hill Gleam'd to the flying moon by fits"; or, "The moon like a rick on fire was rising over the dale." Above all, are those wonderful mnemonics where the sense of the passage is sealed and completed by the sound of the words:

"Myriads of rivulets hurrying through the lawns,  
The moan of doves in immemorial elms,  
The murmuring of innumerable bees?"

It remains, perhaps, to note that the poet is never happier than in those slight touches of the typical wild life of the country with which he completes his pictures. There is a beautiful idea beautifully expressed in the line which tells us that "the music of the moon Sleeps in the plain eggs of the nightingale"; who that has ever handled a spade will fail to recognise the happiness of such lines as these, "Glancing all at once as keenly at her As careful robins eye the delver's toil"?—lines which are, perhaps, matched by those others, "as the thistle shakes, When three grey linnets wrangle for the seed."

One may conclude with a verse from "The Palace of Art," which displays Tennyson's faculty of word-painting at its best, and is particularly appropriate to the pages of COUNTRY LIFE:

"And one, an English home, grey twilight poured  
On dewy pastures, dewy trees,  
Softer than sleep; all things in order stored,  
A haunt of ancient peace."

WILLIAM B. BOULTON.

## THE STRAFFAN STATION STUD

IF ever Mr. E. Kennedy should find himself in need of a motto for his stud, he could find none more appropriate than "Vires acquirit eundo"; for from its earliest days in 1894, when two yearlings only were reared in the Straffan pastures, the youngsters bred and sold by the owner of Baronrath have more than maintained the growing reputation of the stud in the face of continually-increasing competition. Even from the very commencement a Straffan-bred youngster earned distinction, one of the two first reared upon the farm being Lo Ben, who, in spite of being quite a little one—he was only just over 14h.—possessed a tremendous turn of speed, and won no end of races, including the Bathany Stakes. Other winners have followed in his footsteps during the ten years which have elapsed since the founding of the stud, until at the present day the record tells that thirty-seven yearlings have been bred at Straffan, and that between them they have accounted for 100 races, the reputation of the stud being well maintained last year by such animals as Desirée, Grandiflora, and Delaunay, a host in himself.

A noticeable feature of the Straffan Stud, and one which can but have a great influence for good upon the health and well-being of all the stock, is the large extent of pasturage available for a relatively small number of animals. There are in all four farms, embracing an area of 1,000 acres, and no matter whether the season be dry or wet, there is always good



W. A. Rouch.

THE VICTORY.

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pasturage to be found on one or other of these farms, a fact of which it is impossible to over-estimate the importance as far as the growth and healthiness of the foals are concerned. No one who has witnessed the coddling and over-feeding of young blood-stock which obtain in so many of the studs in this country can fail to be struck with the absolutely natural conditions under which Irish breeders prefer to raise their stock. There is no warmer advocate of this excellent system than Mr. E. Kennedy, who also insists that all his youngsters shall be handled from their earliest days, and it is interesting to notice how even the foals are free from all shyness, and will allow their feet and legs to be handled without the slightest fuss or uneasiness. Many other matters of interest in the management of a stud farm are to be noticed at Straffan, and they will be alluded to as we come to them in going our rounds; but just at present our kindly host thinks we had better have a look at the stallions, and here is Fortunio, the sire of Delaunay and other winners. The excellent picture of him by Mr. Rouch which accompanies this article will convey a far better idea of what the horse is really like than any words of mine can do; but one cannot help remarking his extraordinary bone, the shortness of his cannon bones, and the fact that, in spite of his great power and substance, there is no coarseness anywhere about him. He covers plenty of ground, and is, taking him all round, a very fine type of a thorough-bred stallion, as, indeed, he ought to be, if pedigree can count in the makings of a horse. By Isonomy out of Formalité, by Hermit out of Formosa—there is a ring about that which appeals to the imagination, as well as to the more prosaic test of Stud Book research. Moreover, Fortunio was a good race-horse himself, and won many races, mostly over long distances, in France, where he was bred by M. Lefèvre at the Chamant Stud, and he is an animal of exceptionally hardy constitution, with the best of tempers. For some reason or other—or, still

more probably, for no reason at all—breeders left Fortunio severely alone until quite recently; but, in spite of their neglect, and with the scantiest of opportunities, he sired useful winners out of mares who had been, practically speaking, complete failures at the stud. Only thirteen mares visited him in 1902, and of these twelve were half-breds; but there is luck in odd numbers, and the thirteenth happened to be Sedately, whose daughter by Fortunio is known as the Sedately filly, and was only beaten by a head in the British Dominion Two Year Old Race at Sandown Park. However, the period of neglect is over for Fortunio. Well-known and influential breeders are sending him some of their best mares, and his list for next year is filling fast.

The Victory, who shares with Fortunio the duties of the Straffan sires, is a horse of quite a different type to the son of Isonomy. There is not an ounce of lumber anywhere about him, and the bay son of The Admiral and The Charmer is thoroughly representative of the best and highest class of Australian race-horse. He is very symmetrical in his proportions, full of muscle, stands on good legs and feet, shows great character, and is full of vitality. A friend of the writer, who is an excellent judge of a race-horse, and all that concerns him,

wrote some two years ago from Australia, and in the course of his letter remarked: "I wish you could see The Victory; he is quite one of the nicest horses I have seen for many a day, and his action when extended is perfect, being very easy, and covering a tremendous lot of ground at every stride, added to which he runs very gamely, and never knows when he is beaten; one of these days he ought to make a rare stallion. I am forwarding you his pedigree, which you will see is by no means an ordinary one." This horse's performances on the Turf more than endorsed the high opinion my correspondent had formed of his capabilities, for he won races over all distances, from five furlongs to three miles. As a two year old he won the Criterion Stakes, beating Hautvilliers, who afterwards won the Australian Jockey Club Derby and the Victorian Racing Club Derby. As a three year old he won five out of the six races in

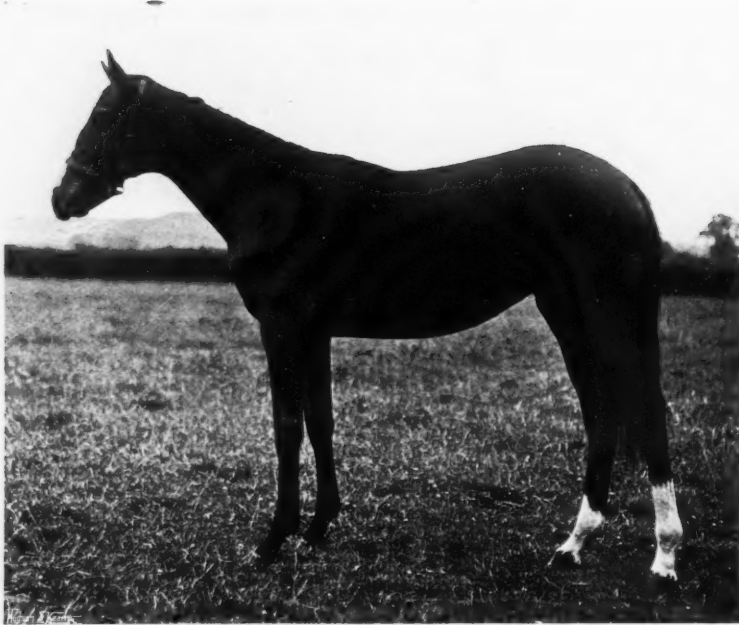


W. A. Rouch.

FORTUNIO.

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*Rough. BROWN FILLY BY FORTUNIO—LADY CALLART. Copyright.*



*Rough. CHESTNUT FILLY BY FORTUNIO—SHIRA. Copyright.*



*Rough. CHESTNUT FILLY BY SANTOI—MAY GIRL. Copyright.*

which he took part, amongst his victories being the South Australian Jockey Club St. Leger and the Adelaide Birthday Cup. In the following year he won the Melbourne Cup of 5,000 sovs., carrying 8st. 12lb., and accomplishing the distance in 3min. 29sec. As a five year old he more than held his own in weight-for-age races, and wound up his season by winning the Cumberland Plate of two miles, and the Australian Jockey Club Plate of three miles at the same meeting. The pedigree of this horse is so unusual in this country, and so full of good strains of blood, that it cannot fail to be of real value from a breeding point of view; so it is here given at some length:

THE VICTORY (1), 1898.			
THE ADMIRAL (2)		THE CHARMER (1)	
Richmond 3	Maribyrnong 3	Henchman 13	Fisherman 11
			Angler (2)
	The Fawn	Chrysolite	Marchioness
Footstep	Countryman (2)	The Witch	Stockwell 3
			Juliet
	Instep	Sorceress	Oxford 12
Heron 19	Rose de Florence	Nuneham 3	Auricula
			Rosicrucian (5)
	The Premier (4)	Bas Bleu	Madame Eglantine
Baroness	Melesina	Stockwell 3	Vexation, by T'stone 14
Tory Boy (4)	Harkaway (2)	Pocahontas	Touchstone 14
			Lancashire Witch
	Potteen		Birdcatcher 11
The Baron (24)	Pocahontas	Honeydear	Ambrose 16
			Pocahontas
	Pyrrhus the First 3		
Maid of Hart	Newminster 8	The Slave	
	Stockwell 3		
Lady Evelyn	Sandal	Heron 19	Mainbrace
			Melbourne (1)
			Cinizelli
The Baron 24	Pocahontas	Touchstone 14	

If this pedigree is carefully studied, it will be seen that, according to the Bruce-Lowe figures, there are no less than twenty-five sire and running figures in the thirty-two quarterings, and of the remaining seven, two are of No. 19, which has worked its way up in the French tabulation to the fourth position. Breeders will notice with some interest that, besides a double cross of Fisherman, there are four lines of Stockwell, a free line of Pocahontas through Auricula, and one of Boarding School Miss (a half-sister to Pocahontas) through Rose de Florence (the dam of Maribyrnong). Those breeders—and fortunately there are many such in these islands—who have the real interest of the British thoroughbred at heart will surely do well to read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest the value of such a "cross" as that afforded by this Australian-bred descendant in tail male of gallant old Fisherman, whose own racing record was little short of the marvellous. One hundred and nineteen times he went down to the starting-post, and on sixty-nine occasions all competitors had to acknowledge defeat by the brown son of Heron and Mainbrace, whose fitting climax to a splendid career consisted in winning the Ascot Cup, 2½ miles, by a length and a-half from Saunterer, with the rest of the field beaten off; two hours later he was again pulled out to compete for the Queen's Plate over a distance of three miles, and once more the verdict was "won by a length and a-half, the rest of the field tailed off." The Victory walks back into his box, and we go off to the pastures stretching along by the canal-side, and there in a paddock of over thirty acres in extent are some of the mares who have done so much for Straffan; they are down at the far end of the paddock, but as soon as they hear Mr. Kennedy's call they come trotting and cantering up, eager to get the friendly pat and little bit of conversation and notice which they know their owner is always ready to give them. Darkie in particular seems to resent any notice which is taken of the others, and so to pacify her she is the first to stand for her portrait, and the dam of Desirée and her sturdy brown colt foal by Bay Ronald came successfully out of the ordeal; then there is Magnitude, a rare stamp of a Barcalaine mare, with a really fine bay colt foal by Fortunio, and the youngster is full of racing promise, with big hocks and knees, and plenty of bone. He looks like being every bit as big as Delaunay when he has done growing. A little further off, Pet, the dam of Ma Jeanette, Marmion, Filipeen, and



Delaunay, is leading a useful-looking colt foal, by Revenue, towards the tubs, into which a nice-looking meal of crushed oats is being poured by one of the grooms; and here one notices a capital plan adopted by Mr. Kennedy for enabling the foals to feed without being disturbed by their dams. Just against a high and sheltering fence a little plot of ground is railed off with post and rails which are amply high enough to enable the foals to go underneath them, but too low for the mares, and inside this enclosure are the little tubs from which the foals feed at their leisure. The plan is a very simple one, but is excellent in its working. Other mares are to be seen at the Newtown Farm, where there is a magnificent range of buildings, and huge farm storage and granary, erected years ago, when corn was at a price undreamed of in these present days of agricultural depression. Excellent pastures lie around these buildings; even after a long period of drought and heat the undergrowth is thick and fresh. Panama, a bay mare by Privateer, with a filly foal by Fortunio, Surehaven, a chestnut mare by Sweetheart out of Clarehaven's dam, with a colt foal by The Baker, and Castellar, a bay Perizel mare with a filly by Carbine, are all healthy and thriving on the limestone-fed herbage. Other mares belonging to the stud are Maund, a chestnut mare by Tarporley out of Ianthe, with a filly by Fortunio, to whom she is again in foal, Lena Rhodes, a chestnut mare



W. A. Rouch.

DARKIE, DAM OF DESIREE.

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to possess any of the racing qualities of her famous half-brother she will bring further credit to an already famous stud, and as far as looks go, she is certainly very racing-like, well-ribbed, and with fine lengthy quarters. There are only a couple of colts included in the team for Doncaster, and Mr. Kennedy asks if we would like to see them do a canter. Naturally enough we should, and, wondering not a little how the canter is going to be brought off, we follow our host halfway down a long paddock, where both the grass and the going are really perfect. In a few minutes a lad mounted on Richmond, an old hunter who has won races between flags, makes his appearance, and sets off at a sharp canter; the colts are let out from their boxes and set off after him; the old horse enters into the game, and increases his pace; so do the colts, who have not the slightest intention of getting left, and away they go, stretching themselves out and simply revelling in their youthful strength and speed. There will be no soft flesh on such youngsters as these when they come under Messrs. Tattersall's hammer at Doncaster, and there will be no fear of their "melting away" when the trainer begins to put them through their facings; they are both chestnuts. One of them is by Love Wisely out of Monday (the dam of Doochary), and is rather a late May foal, but he has plenty of size, and uses himself very freely; and his companion is a fine foal by St. Frusquin out of Naughty Chat, and has all the appearance of developing into a race-horse. He is not wanting in size, and has all the length, reach, and scope of a good young horse.

A too-short day is drawing to its close, and the representatives of COUNTRY LIFE must bid farewell to their kindly hosts and say, "With many thanks, good-night." T. H. B.



W. A. Rouch.

PET, DAM OF DELAUNAY.

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by Pioneer out of Lena, the grandam of Muskerry and Masque II., Vahren, a fine chestnut mare by Bona Vista, and Monday, the dam of Doochary, Shrove Tuesday, Hereford, and Winning Week. We have here seen, so to speak, the machinery of the stud; now to see the result of its working in the shape of the yearlings which are going to be sent to Doncaster. In the roomy enclosure of the Philibeen Paddock are a couple of fillies by Fortunio, one a chestnut filly out of Shira, a nice short-legged stamp of a Sir Bevy's mare—the youngster is quite a useful one, with capital loins and shoulders, good limbs, and is by no means wanting in class; her companion is a great, raking, racing-like brown filly out of Lady Callart, by Atheling, and she has a great resemblance to the filly purchased by Mr. Croker last year out of the Sledmere team for 3,600 guineas, but she is bigger all over, and it is to be hoped that whoever is fortunate enough to become her owner will allow her plenty of time to develop; she has great power, plenty of bone, good second thighs, and moves with that easy stealing action so characteristic of many of the best race-horses. Santoi is the sire of a rare sort of a chestnut filly out of May Girl, the dam of Clorane, and his daughter has many of her sire's characteristic points; great power, big muscular thighs and arms, strong, well-shaped loins, and plenty of size and substance are the principal attributes of this young lady, who is, moreover, a rare mover. Last of the yearling fillies is the bay daughter of Jacquemart and Pet; if she should prove



Rouch.

CH. COLT BY ST. FRUSQUIN—NAUGHTY CHAT.

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THE late Sir Bernard Burke said with some truth of Lowesby Hall that, though devoid of architectural ornament, it presents "a commanding aspect that at once proclaims it one of our first-class 'ancestral halls.'" That it is not entirely destitute of architectural adornment our pictures will declare, for there is undeniable charm in its mellow old brick and grace in its details, while its simple terracing and its admirable segmented stairway, in whose clefts and crannies many green things grow, are full of attraction. We say, as we look upon this place, that men of mark may well have possessed and loved it, because we find distinction in its character and form. Here, we say at least, is a garden of bygone date, where quaint and stately walks must have existed with hedges of yew and the like. Now we discover that fancy or the taste of the time—and shall we regret it?—allows to Nature much of her own sweet and wayward will, so that exuberant greenery grows where the careful hand of the formal gardener of other days repressed, curbed, and guided her luxuriance, while the terraces and ponds are in her vigorous

grasp or shadowed by her sylvan splendour. The contrasts are rare and beautiful, and the green shaven lawns, the venerable trees, and the woodland expanses form a setting for the old house which contributes much to constitute a peculiarly representative picture of English country life.

Anciently, Lowesby was the possession of the great family of Burdett, and Edward I. granted free warren there to William Burdett, whose daughter and heiress carried it to her husband, Thomas Ashby, and their descendants continued to live at Lowesby for many generations. There is a tragic legend concerning the place in the days of the Burdetts, one of whose members is said, on returning from the Crusades, urged thereto by the malevolent slanders of miscreant retainers, to have slain his innocent, devoted, and unsuspecting lady—in atonement for which terrible and fatal error the unhappy man is believed to have founded the monastery of Arrow. Of the history of the place in the hands of the Ashbys there appears to be nothing to record, though, in the passage of many generations, it must have resounded with the sounds both of laughter and wailing. It is said



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FROM EAST TERRACE.

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SOUTH-EAST FRONT.

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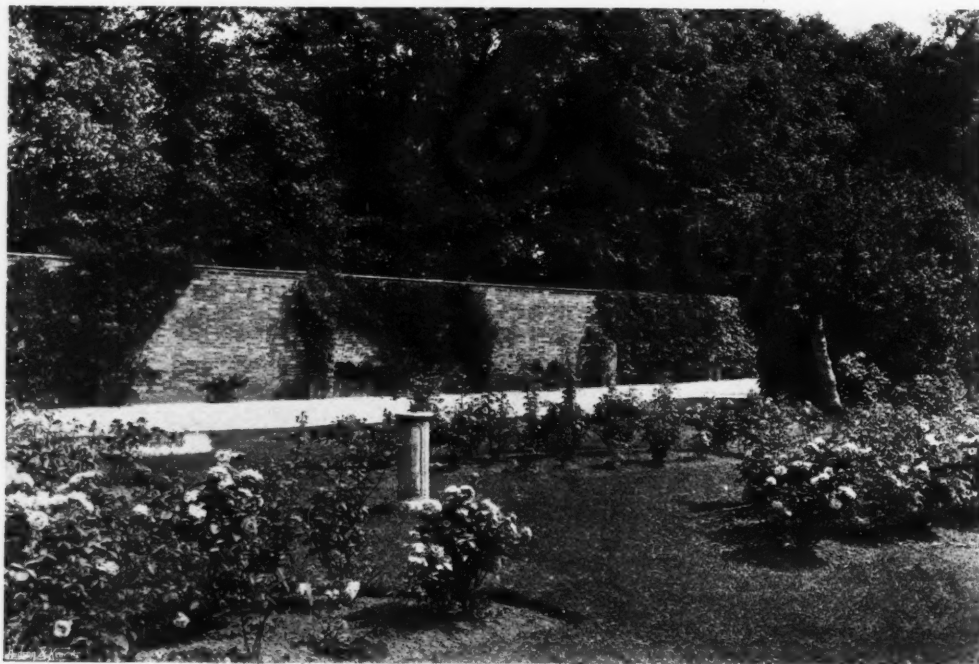
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NORTH-EAST FRONT.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

to have been alienated by Thomas Ashby in the time of Queen Elizabeth, but Burton, who wrote his "Description of Leicestershire" in 1622, tells us that it was then the inheritance of George Ashby of Queenby, Esq., "a gentleman well qualified and well deserving." Subsequently, in the year 1650, Lowesby became the property of the celebrated Colonel Hutchinson, the regicide, governor of Nottingham, and here his widow, Lucy Hutchinson, wrote some part of the well-known memoirs of the stout Parliamentary soldier, which give, in the graphic pictures of his personality, one of the strongest portraits we possess of the men who stood and worked with Cromwell. His figure, says Green, stands out from his wife's canvas with the grace and tenderness of a portrait by Van Dyck. Mrs. Hutchinson gives a remarkable account of how the place came into her husband's hands. It had passed into the possession of Lady Dormer, but she being dead, it had descended to her granddaughter, "a papist,"

Lady Anne Somerset, daughter of the Marquess of Winchester, Lady Anne, being then of the age of nineteen, or more, was very anxious to sell Lowesby, and entreated Hutchinson to buy it. With Hutchinson the lady "had some alliance," but he told her he was not in a "purchasing condition." She then besought him to procure leave from the Parliament that she might sell it, which he did, but without success. Nevertheless, Lady Anne and her friends, including a priest, who was her adviser, still urged him to buy the place; but he resisted their importunities, saying he had not the money. They then offered him time for the payment "till he could sell his own land, and assured him it should be such a pennyworth that he should not repent the selling of his own land to buy it." He urged the trouble and difficulty that would result; but at last Lady Anne's importunity triumphed over Hutchinson's resistance, and he became the possessor of Lowesby. The sale took place on September 10th, 1650. We may certainly suppose that Hutchinson had a great desire to possess himself of this beautiful estate, but foresaw certain dangers. He had also, we cannot doubt, a wish to assist his young relative, and the money was secured to the Marquess of Dorchester, whom the lady and her friends had a "desire to compass for a husband." In this matrimonial negotiation the colonel took a part which we may believe to have been judicious, though it was unsuccessful. Moreover, not all the friends or interest he had in the Parliament sufficed to procure leave for the Lady Anne to sell her house and property, though he urged "all his merits and sufferings," and all he could obtain was leave to compound for the interest of the state in the manor or tithes of Lowesby, for which he had contracted with Lady Anne Somerset, upon payment to be made by him of £2,000. This was managed largely by Sir Harry Vane, and Major-General



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THE PATH TO THE CHURCH.

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"COUNTRY LIFE."

A GARDEN SCENE.

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Harrison, who opposed it, explained to Hutchinson that he did so because he would have "no composition admitted from idolators." It was thought that permission to the lady to sell "would be a precedent to other papists."

Mrs. Lucy Hutchinson, some time after her husband's death, alienated the estate to Richard Wollaston, Esq., son of Henry Wollaston, citizen of London. The new possessor died in 1691, and left a son Josiah, who married the sister of Sir Edward Lawrence, Baronet, of St. Ives. Their grandson was Sir Isaac Wollaston of Lowesby, who succeeded by special remainder to the baronetcy conferred on his uncle, Sir Edward Lawrence. Sir Isaac's only son, who bore his own name, died an infant in 1756, when the title became extinct, and the Lowesby estate passed to Anne, the latter's younger sister, who married, in 1772, Sir Thomas Fowke, Knight. Sir Thomas was the only son of General Fowke, Governor of Gibraltar in 1753, and as a cornet of the Scots Greys he carried the regimental standard at the battle of Minden. He was afterwards equerry to the Duke of Cumberland and Lieutenant-Colonel of the 3rd Foot Guards, and he served as a magistrate and deputy-lieutenant of Leicestershire. The Wollaston baronetcy having recently become extinct, it was revived in 1814 by George III. in the person of Sir Thomas Fowke's son, Sir Frederick Gustavus Fowke, ancestor of Sir Frederick Ferrers Conant Fowke, the present baronet.

Such has been the somewhat curious, but generally uneventful, history of Lowesby Hall. It has been valued by many successive proprietors since Colonel Hutchinson secured it in such an unusual fashion. The character of the house has already been described, and, for the rest, is admirably illustrated by the accompanying pictures. It is interesting within and without, and has a drawing-room, commanding most enchanting



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THE PROMENADE.

"COUNTRY LIFE"

views, which has been described as one of the most perfectly proportioned rooms in Leicestershire. The mansion is stored with many attractive things, including family portraits, and amongst them is a fine full-length of General Ireton, a relative of Colonel Hutchinson's, painted by Houthorst, which the colonel is supposed to have left here.

But the great charm of Lowesby is in its pleasure grounds. Nature, by contributing a rich diversity of surface, has done much to create the landscape beauty of the place, and the first baronet of the present family, who did much to perfect the estate, "admitted to the grounds," says Sir Bernard Burke, "the aid of art with so judicious a hand, and with such exquisite taste, as to render them a model of English landscape gardening." Exceedingly beautiful and attractive they are, and there is abundant landscape charm in the hundred acres of the park and the enchanting surroundings.

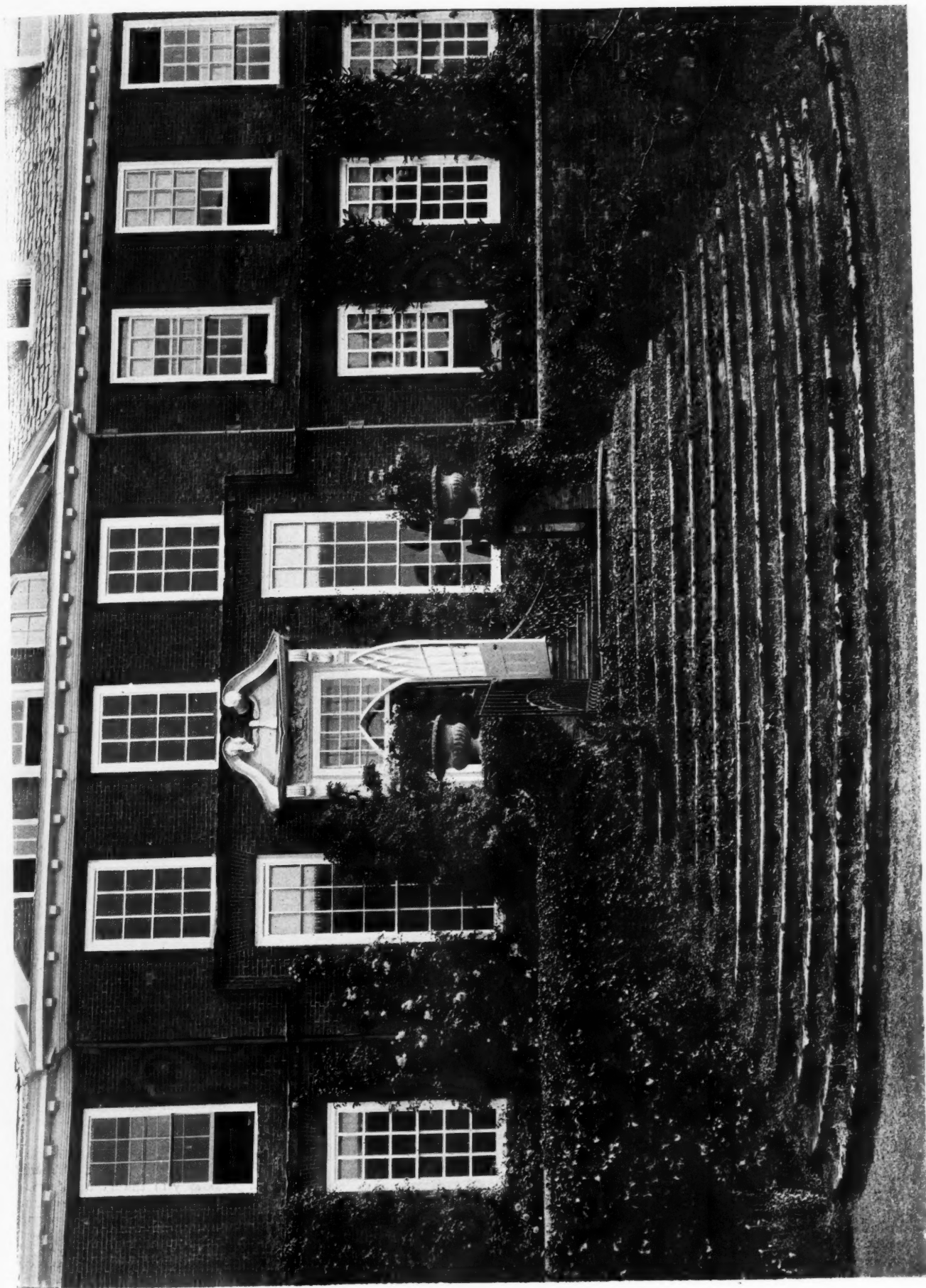


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SEEN FROM THE HOUSE.

"COUNTRY LIFE"





"COUNTRY LIFE."

DIGNITY OF AGE.

But it is not the landscape charm of Lowesby that is disclosed by our pictures, but the fascinating character of quaintness that rests upon the place. The south-west front, picturesque in its red brick and its white painted window frames, has its walls vested with many beautiful climbers, and there is a pleasant terrace before it from which the attractive garden may be surveyed. Vases full of radiant flowers stand by the door and adorn the terrace wall. The descent is by the fine segmental stairway which is represented in several of our pictures, and it will be noticed how the tendrils of climbing plants and countless green and floral growths, which cleave to the crannies of masonry, are permitted and even encouraged to invade the descent. The idea is quaint and the effect pleasing and picturesque, and, as may be seen, the neighbouring terrace wall is richly clothed with green, while, as a contrast, the smooth shaven lawn, with its dial in the midst, and its trim flower-beds, is there to tell us that the floreal of the stairway is designed and intended. Ornamental trees and shrubs, banks of evergreens, and sentinel yews complete the garden picture. More it is



Copyright.

LAWN ABOVE THE FISH-FONDS.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

unnecessary to say in description of this enchanting place, which, for the rest, is admirably illustrated in the accompanying pictures.

## AN ENTERTAINING TROUT LAKE.

LOCH LEVEN, in the shire of Kinross, is royal in more than one respect. Besides being intimately associated with the romance of Mary Queen of Scots, it is royal among lakes on its own account. Day by day, in the journals of Scotland, official news from Loch Leven is published as scrupulously as the news of the Court itself. Every trout caught on it is a public character next morning. As this may be puzzling to many readers outside Scotland, some facts about Loch Leven may be acceptable. Eleven streams run into it, eleven run out. It has eleven islands, it holds fish of eleven kinds. Twice eleven boats lie beside the jetty at Kinross; if you go round the lake you walk twice eleven miles. In fact, Loch Leven has eleven peculiarities into which the number eleven enters. For our present purpose the boats and the area are the statistical items most important. They will roughly picture the water to the mind's eye of the angler. It is a circular, wide sheet, bounded by hills on the east and the south, and does not seem crowded when all the boats are out. The boats are the property of an association that holds the lake on lease. The business of the association is partly sporting and partly industrial. You may fish for trout at a cost of half-a-crown an hour, paying also half-a-crown to one of the two boatmen, whose comrade is paid by the association. Why two boatmen? it may be asked. Because sometimes there are high storms when the wind is in the west. Even two oarsmen are not always able to take you back to dinner at Kinross, and when that happens you have to forage as best you may at the base of the Lomond Hills. Then the association does a brisk trade in stocking less-favoured

waters. Rainbow trout looked at one time like becoming fashionable throughout England, but they have not displaced "Lochlevens" in the general esteem of either sportsmen or epicures. Whosoever owns a lake or a stream in need of fresh blood is sure to think of Loch Leven, the trout in which are generally regarded as being the best in the whole world.

Why are they so good? That is a question which sportsmen and naturalists have been putting to themselves and to one another for many generations. The fish differ from brown trout to be found anywhere else. Their hues approach those of the sea-trout. They have a fragrance peculiarly their own, agreeable as, though quite other than, that of grayling. Their flesh is red, and tastes as if it were that of singularly delicate salmon. A good many years ago it was suggested that they might be land-locked sea-trout. It was said that perhaps Loch Leven had once been an arm of the sea, and a volcanic upheaval had shut it in. But Mr. Malloch's opinion is that the remarkable excellence of the trout is due simply to the remarkable fitness of the lake as a home of trout. Differing from most other lakes, Loch Leven

is not shallow near the shores, and deep beyond that. It is shallow all over. Hardly any part of it is more than eight feet deep. The bottom is of bright sand in some places, of bright sand and mud in others. The sunshine strikes right through the water. Therefore, the trout, which, like other wild creatures, assimilate the hue of their haunt, are bright. There was not time to ask Mr. Malloch why the fish were superior in quality, besides being different from their species elsewhere in colour; but I think I can perceive that also. In an ordinary lake, shallow only for twenty or thirty fathoms, along the shores, there is much less food than in Loch Leven. It is only in comparatively shallow water, in the mud or gravel at the bottom, or among the weeds, that aquatic insects, on which trout feed, lay their eggs. Thus food grows only in a small part of an ordinary lake. On the other hand, it grows all over the water on Loch Leven, which, consequently, has a unique capacity to maintain a stock of fish in exceptional condition.

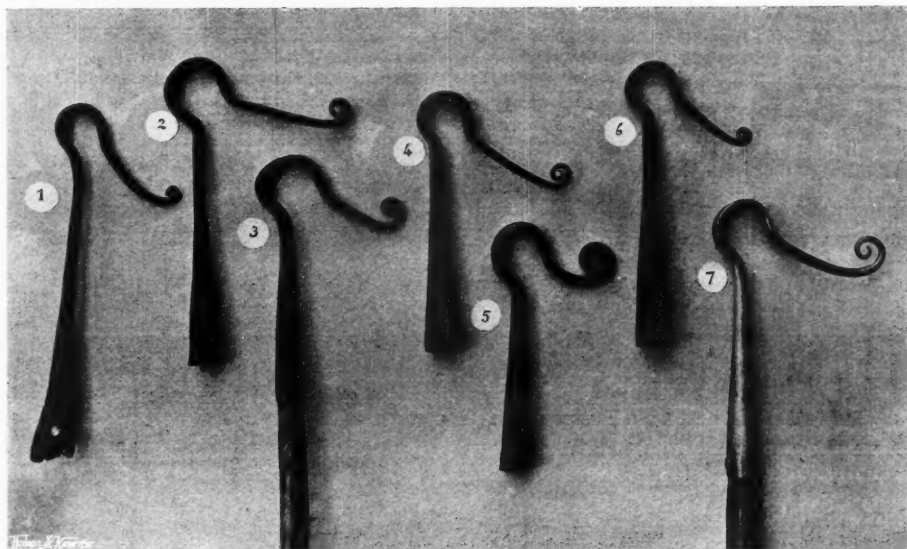
Recently, however, good sport has been infrequent. Not very long ago, the Loch Leven report used to fill about a fifth of a column of the morning journal every day of the season, but now it is a few lines only. Baskets have become so light that fishermen on the lake are fewer than they were wont to be. The water is as much as ever in the minds of sportsmen, but many of these hold off until the Loch Newsmen's circular shows that its ancient glories are reviving. When again will a competent fisherman be able to go for a day on Loch Leven with a fair chance of returning with a basket of twenty-five trout weighing as many pounds? No one can tell; but there are suggestions as to why the average basket is so light. Some say that the pike have got the upper hand, and that the trout which escape are too much afraid to rise; others believe that the trout have taken to preying on the young perch, and have so lost the natural delicacy of palate to which aquatic insects appeal. A friend of mine forwards the pike theory; but, surely, it is scarce sufficing? Twelve years ago the lake was not so systematically netted for pike as it is now; yet twelve years ago sport was much better than it has become. It is easier to find fault with any attempt at explanation than to offer a plausible surmise. Still, an idea occurs. In the early editions of "The Sportsman's Guide," it was said that "sixty years ago it was believed that the trout in Loch Leven would not rise at fly." There may have been more in that remark than the writer realised. Is there perhaps a periodicity in the habits of trout? Is it conceivable that a tribe of them may live on flies for ten years or so and then take to bottom feeding for a similar period? It is by logic rather than by any known facts of natural history that one is impelled to this conjecture; yet it is more plausible than it seems at first. Certainly, it was not removal of the pike that caused the trout suddenly to begin to rise about a hundred years ago—the pike were left alone then. Besides, the decline of sport on Loch Leven has not been gradual and continuous. There have been good periods and bad periods. Quite evidently, then, the surmise of periodicity has some bearing on the problem.

W. EARL HODGSON.



## THE SHEPHERD'S CROOK.

It is safe to say that there is no object—excepting, perhaps, a cricket bat—with whose shape the artist of the baser sort takes liberties so fantastic as those with which he labels the form of the shepherd's crook. He may be able to draw other rustic instruments with some approach to accuracy; but set him to make a picture of a crook, and a profligate imagination leads him to represent it by grotesque lines and twirls of paint or ink that bear but little likeness to the reality. This is due, no doubt, partly to lack of observation, but largely also to want of a proper appreciation of the use for which this most essential of the shepherd's tools is designed. Hence, the careless and ignorant draughtsman will cheerfully draw upon his own imagination and produce the semblance of a formidable and monstrous weapon that could by no possibility perform the duties required of it; for the crook is simply an implement devised to catch sheep withal. Watch the shepherd as he does this. See how he carefully approaches the sheep from behind, holding his crook with the point downwards, thrusts it quickly and surely between the animal's hind legs, and then with a quick turn of the wrist and dropping of the knuckles, so that the point of his crook is directed outwards horizontally, slips the iron round the animal's leg. The moment she feels the touch the sheep struggles violently, but at the first kick the crook slides into its place in the hollow of the hock, and then a half turn of



Bunnell.

SHEPHERDS' CROOKS.

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the point upwards holds the leg of the struggling creature securely and painlessly. The crook, therefore, must be narrow in splay, so that it can be passed easily between the animal's legs, and at the same time not too large in the bow, or the sheep will jerk its leg out of it.

Further, it must be remembered that a sheep's leg is a very brittle thing, so brittle, indeed, that a very slight shock, such as that caused by a stone, incautiously thrown, which strikes it, will break the bone as if it were glass, and the skin with which it is covered is of a most delicate texture. So the crook must be carefully rounded, so that there may be no danger of chafing the tender membrane or of bruising the fragile bone. Again, the sheep is an animal so timid that it will hardly allow its own shepherd to approach, and so strong that, when handled, and not securely held, it will struggle with such a clumsy energy that it is a matter of some difficulty to restrain it. The crook, therefore, must be strong, and yet light enough for the shepherd to be able to wield it with quickness and certainty.

An ideal crook must be of moderate size, with not too broad an angle between shank and point, just wide enough in the throat to allow the sheep's leg to slip neatly into the bow, large enough in the bow to hold the leg without undue compression, and, above all, it must be well finished, with no sharp edges and points and angles. It is not by any means every smith who



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HOMEWARD OVER THE MARSHES.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

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is not shallow near the shores, and deep beyond that. It is shallow all over. Hardly any part of it is more than 1 ft. The bottom is of bright sand in some places, of bright sand and mud in others. The sunshine strikes right through the water. Therefore, the trout, which, like other wild creatures, assimilate the hue of their haunt, are bright. There was not time to ask Mr. Malloch why the fish were superior in quality, besides being different from their species elsewhere in colour; but I think I can perceive that also. In an ordinary lake, shallow only for 20 yds. or 30 yds. along the shores, there is much less food than in Loch Leven. It is only in comparatively shallow water, in the mud or gravel at the bottom, or among the weeds, that aquatic insects, on which trout feed, lay their eggs. Thus food grows only in a small part of an ordinary lake. On the other hand, it grows all over the water on Loch Leven, which, consequently, has a unique capacity to maintain a stock of fish in exceptional condition.

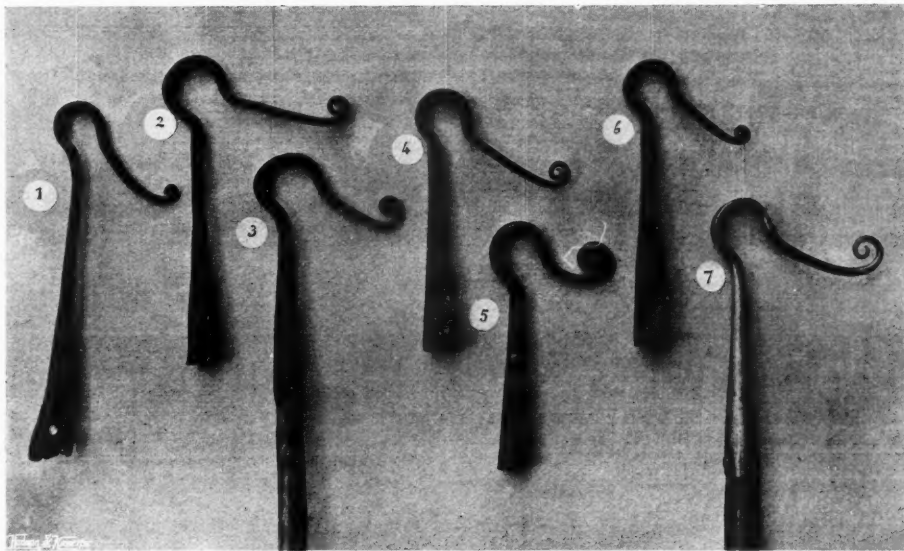
Recently, however, good sport has been infrequent. Not very long ago, the Loch Leven report used to fill about a fifth of a column of the morning journal every day of the season, but now it is a few lines only. Baskets have become so light that fishermen on the lake are fewer than they were wont to be. The water is as much as ever in the minds of sportsmen, but many of these hold off until the Loch Newsman's circular shows that its ancient glories are reviving. When again will a competent fisherman be able to go for a day on Loch Leven with a fair chance of returning with a basket of twenty-five trout weighing as many pounds? No one can tell; but there are suggestions as to why the average basket is so light. Some say that the pike have got the upper hand, and that the trout which escape are too much afraid to rise; others believe that the trout have taken to preying on the young perch, and have so lost the natural delicacy of palate to which aquatic insects appeal. A friend of mine forwards the pike theory; but, surely, it is scarce sufficing? Twelve years ago the lake was not so systematically netted for pike as it is now; yet twelve years ago sport was much better than it has become. It is easier to find fault with any attempt at explanation than to offer a plausible surmise. Still, an idea occurs. In the early editions of "The Sportsman's Guide," it was said that "sixty years ago it was believed that the trout in Loch Leven would not rise at fly." There may have been more in that remark than the writer realised. Is there perhaps a periodicity in the habits of trout? Is it conceivable that a tribe of them may live on flies for ten years or so and then take to bottom feeding for a similar period? It is by logic rather than by any known facts of natural history that one is impelled to this conjecture; yet it is more plausible than it seems at first. Certainly, it was not removal of the pike that caused the trout suddenly to begin to rise about a hundred years ago—the pike were left alone then. Besides, the decline of sport on Loch Leven has not been gradual and continuous. There have been good periods and bad periods. Quite evidently, then, the surmise of periodicity has some bearing on the problem.

W. EARL HODGSON.



# THE SHEPHERD'S CROOK.

It is safe to say that there is no object—excepting, perhaps, a cricket bat—with whose shape the artist of the baser sort takes liberties so fantastic as those with which he likens the form of the shepherd's crook. He may be able to draw other rustic instruments with some approach to accuracy; but set him to make a picture of a crook, and a profligate imagination leads him to represent it by grotesque lines and twirls of



Bunnell.

SHEPHERDS' CROOKS.

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paint or ink that bear but little likeness to the reality. This is due, no doubt, partly to lack of observation, but largely also to want of a proper appreciation of the use for which this most essential of the shepherd's tools is designed. Hence, the careless and ignorant draughtsman will cheerfully draw upon his own imagination and produce the semblance of a formidable and monstrous weapon that could by no possibility perform the duties required of it; for the crook is simply an implement devised to catch sheep withal. Watch the shepherd as he does this. See how he carefully approaches the sheep from behind, holding his crook with the point downwards, thrusts it quickly and surely between the animal's hind legs, and then with a quick turn of the wrist and dropping of the knuckles, so that the point of his crook is directed outwards horizontally, slips the iron round the animal's leg. The moment she feels the touch the sheep struggles violently, but at the first kick the crook slides into its place in the hollow of the hock, and then a half turn of

the point upwards holds the leg of the struggling creature securely and painlessly. The crook, therefore, must be narrow in splay, so that it can be passed easily between the animal's legs, and at the same time not too large in the bow, or the sheep will jerk its leg out of it.

Further, it must be remembered that a sheep's leg is a very brittle thing, so brittle, indeed, that a very slight shock, such as that caused by a stone, incautiously

thrown, which strikes it, will break the bone as if it were glass, and the skin with which it is covered is of a most delicate texture. So the crook must be carefully rounded, so that there may be no danger of chafing the tender membrane or of bruising the fragile bone. Again, the sheep is an animal so timid that it will hardly allow its own shepherd to approach, and so strong that, when handled, and not securely held, it will struggle with such a clumsy energy that it is a matter of some difficulty to restrain it. The crook, therefore, must be strong, and yet light enough for the shepherd to be able to wield it with quickness and certainty.

An ideal crook must be of moderate size, with not too broad an angle between shank and point, just wide enough in the throat to allow the sheep's leg to slip neatly into the bow, large enough in the bow to hold the leg without undue compression, and, above all, it must be well finished, with no sharp edges and points and angles. It is not by any means every smith who



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HOMEWARD OVER THE MARSHES.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

can forge a crook that fulfils all these essentials. The old fashion was to make it with the inclination of point to socket somewhat acute, and a glance at the distance between the curl and the shank enables one to judge with some accuracy the comparative age of the instrument—the sharper the angle the older the crook. Nowadays a more obtuse angle is preferred. The width of the throat, too, is a matter of considerable importance, and a cunning smith will gauge this to a nicety by making the throat of sufficient width for the first joint of his thumb to pass through it without touching, and pretty it is and startling to see him test this width by passing his horny thumb with smooth certainty between the edges of the glowing metal. Some crooks are beautifully finished, as if the maker had taken a positive delight in producing work as decorative as possible. Much careful labour is often expended on the fashioning of the curl of metal at the end of the point, and it will be readily understood that the more neatly and smoothly this piece of necessary decoration is rounded the less chance there is of the point doing hurt to the animal's delicate skin.

Within the limits thus indicated an almost infinite and most subtle variety of shape is to be found. No two crooks are of exactly the same curve and weight and finish, though all conform more or less nearly to the ideal shape. The seven which are



A. H. Blake. AFTER THE DAY'S WORK. Copyright.

here figured fall into two groups, according to their method of manufacture. The first two are much lighter than the rest. The shank in each is comparatively long and thin and springs somewhat sharply from the socket, and the metal is more finely drawn and thinner throughout. The next four are stouter and shorter in the head, and these crooks have an appearance and an actuality of dumpy strength that are lacking in the first two examples. The last in order is the youngest of the collection. It is not more than forty years old at the most, and though it is more luxuriant in shape than any of the others, it clearly belongs to the second group. No. 1 is a very old crook, as the strong drop of the point shows, and is quite rude in execution. It is too narrow in the throat to have been a really good implement, and the fine curl at the end of the point, so marked a feature in some of the other specimens, is here only represented by a single turn of the metal. The point, however, splays outward well towards its end, and for all practical purposes the finish is sufficient. Its weight is 8oz. No. 2 is a crook of the same type, long in the shank and light in weight—too light, in fact, for when it passed into the possession of its present owner it was much bent. The bow is unusually large, the throat is, however, of good width, and the point sweeps outwards well. This crook weighs 11oz. No. 3 is the lightest crook of the set, weighing with its staff only 1lb. 4oz. It is a very rude piece of forging, with a

carelessly-formed bow and very wide throat, but is an adequate tool still, though it has suffered much from more than a hundred years of hard usage. It was till recently for at least three generations in the hands of the same peasant family. No. 4 is a very fine crook of the narrow archaic type, too acute in angle for the modern taste and with a somewhat narrow throat, but very strong, splendid in balance and proportion, and with a finely-wrought curl to finish it off. The weight of it is 9oz. The point of No. 5 is exceptionally short, but this beautiful crook-head is a fine piece of workmanship—compact and well rounded, with a throat of the proper width and with no projecting angles. It weighs only 10oz., but is so carefully wrought and the metal is so well concentrated that it is strong enough to do centuries of work. No. 6 is much plainer and heavier—it weighs 15oz.—and, though scarcely wide enough in the throat, is a good serviceable crook. Its socket is a stout tapering tube to which the shank is welded. In that respect this crook differs from all the others, for their sockets are in each case made in one piece with the rest of the head, the end of the shank being beaten out thin and forged into socket shape. The last crook of the collection may almost be put into a class by itself. Its great strength and weight—it weighs, with its staff, 1lb. 12oz.—the unnecessary width of the throat, the outward sweep of the point, and the luxuriant curl, all combine to stamp it as a modern production. Its most notable peculiarity is the half-moon section of the bow, which is flat on its outer side, while that of all the others is circular; and this exceptional characteristic of its construction has led one shepherd at least to stigmatise it as a poor crook, for he considered that there was a possible danger that the edge, not being absolutely round, might hurt a sheep's leg. It nevertheless has done a great amount of hard and valuable work, and although nearly half a century old, is as perfect as on the day it left the smithy.

So much for the head—the business part of the crook. It must be added that ideas as vague as those that prevail as to its shape are held with regard to the length of the staff, which is almost invariably imagined to be longer than it actually is; 4ft. or so less than 4ft. is an average length. The present writer well remembers the shock to his country eye when he saw a crook-head that he had given to a London friend perched dizzily on the end of a thin pole nearly 7ft. long. An ordinary ash broom-handle makes as good a crook-staff as can be desired. It is tough and not too heavy, and of about the proper thickness; but a straight stick of hazel or willow or elm will serve equally well.

E. E. D.

## THE FAIR.

**A**FTER reading an article on "The Decay of the Village," thoughts wandered to recollections, awakened by its lines, concerning the village I know best of all the villages that be. They were desultory, ambling thoughts, until suddenly a little company of caravans came over the hill, went by my window in procession, and hitched my thoughts on to the green and red striped shafts of their dusty yellow vans, taking me along with them to the Fair. In a trice I was back there in the straggling village street, watching, with a crowd of my years and kind, the erection of stalls, "standings" was the local name for them, set up for the sale of all those cloying and toothsome delights of which our souls were to sicken in the days to come. Four days saw the duration of our Fair, which was, indeed, a fair of fairs, and duly chronicled as such in calendars devoted to these festivals.

The first day was mere rehearsal of pleasuring, a putting into shape on the part of the providers, and a watching on the part of the participators, of glories which to us youngsters would be none the less glorious because we had witnessed their upraising. Dear, credulous, pleasure-impatient days of youth, not all the gold of Midas may bring you back again! What a hammering went on, what a clattering of trestles and sound elm boards, all marked with the initials of the lord of the manor (famous initials, by the way, that an he knew the reader would do respect to), "R. H. B.," as on black lead pencils, near the tops! Then, joy of joys, came the entry of Bradley's show, rearing its green sides along what seemed a tremendous distance, with most decidedly noisome dust, protested against in vain by irate shopkeepers and decent householders, the children's foes for the moment, and openly branded as such. What a business it had to fit itself in, between the grocer's door and the entrance to a timber yard, whose owner was invariably seized with a desire to start his long timber carriages in and out on the days that the show was a-building. It must have been merely to satisfy himself that in an emergency they might squeeze between the shooting gallery and the front entrance to the canvas temple, for, if memory serve, none such ever did pass once the Fair commenced in grim, or rather gay, earnest; the spirit of it caught, so to speak, everybody, even protesting traders and outraged old ladies themselves.

How we watched, trembling for the fulfilment of our dramatic hopes, as we sniffed the mingled odours of sawdust and naphtha, and searched with diligence for lapses in the bulging sides that gave us, peeping Toms, points of vantage! The theatre reared complete, the proprietor of all its wonders, a personage the object of excessive veneration by ourselves (not at all discounted by an air of general unwashedness) generously arranged a semi-dress rehearsal on the platform outside, a tantalising glimpse, at which we gazed open-mouthed, until it stopped at such an artfully crucial moment that for Hodge, with Phyllis on his arm, none other course remained than to crowd struggling up the narrow stairway, to the full and further dramatic exposition within. "Front row of reserved seats sixpence. Admission



threepence. No half-price." Alas! grim prohibition of the latter stentorian announcement. What was there for mortal small boy but to scamper round to the afore-mentioned rent, and applying an eye, gain microscopic views of the villain's calves, or the raven-haired and elderly heroine's cheek, holding forth to less favoured companions on the blood-curdling scenes, one—almost—just—could see! When pence were plentiful we anxiously we spun the poised and polished brass arrow which never stopped at the coveted prize, but always at some insignificant and despised thing; one was too disgusted to annex! Further on was the nuts-shooting stall, with its spinning disc on which 100 always eluded the marksman. I forget what fortune awaited the future Queen's Prizeman who did get 100; but as that supreme event never came off, it required no permanent place in my mind. I remember 10 and 15 were each a handful of nuts, while 30 resulted in a fat brown-paper cigar, which invariably doubled up the unfortunate winner, and usually ended in bed at a sorrowfully early hour and a humiliating pill. What fellows they were, too, those stall-keepers, swarthy, tattooed, red-lipped magnates, their stalls bizarre emblazonments in vermilion, emerald, and gold. I can see now, one stall in particular, with brass tokens, curious tokens and brass medals, with painted black cloth in oil-colours depicting scenes by land and sea, with fearsome beasts and armed pirates—Algerian choice—and in the centre a kind of armorial bearing with a dog-Latin inscription, which the proud owner gave us to understand was the classic meaning of the platitude, "nobody gets a prize who misses," which miss was invited from a muzzle held less than 5ft. away from a door, for the little snarlers would persist in puffing away from even so huge a target.

On the last nights came the fair's social apotheosis, to which even our elders succumbed so far as to walk past and admire a "standing," the very longest and brightest there, above which the proprietor's name blazed in lights a foot long that flared magnificently, making the beholders wink with its mere brilliance. That process should rather have lain with the vendors of fairings in red-lidded canisters at 3s. 6d. the pound, handed out to gallants, sweethearts on arm, or delivered smilingly into the hand of prosperous and benevolent middle age who "stood treat." For us children, the sweetness of sugared almonds, pink and white, the stickiness of clove comfits, or the red and yellow barley sugar-sticks twisted as a ram's horn; or, perhaps, best remembered of all, cinnamon rock that crumbled in the very act of eating, and had, therefore, to be licked from the palm in a safer mode, much rebuked by polite circles. The most aristocratic fairing was assuredly the coy macaroon, one only of which our pennies, saved with such harrowings of soul, bought for mother's gift, and one which she never omitted to receive in a becoming and annually surprised manner of gratitude, almost making up for the anguished hoarding that made it possible.

The lamps come, and the caravans are long out of sight. Youth has travelled away with them, and middle-age retakes his place; yet some vague, fleeting presence has been left momentarily behind, that puts the spirit awhile in remembrance of that reckless, childish intensity of enjoyment, that grasped eagerly at to-day, with very little thought of yesterday, and certainly none at all of to-morrow.

EDITH C. M. DART.

## ROSA MUNDI SUPERNI.

Who knows, my Belovéd, who knows  
How first came the seed of the rose,  
When the world was a waste with a thorn?  
Ah think! when the petals unfurl'd,  
And the first rose bloomed on the world,  
And the red of the summer was born?  
Did the Spirit that lurks in the whole,  
With a stirring and quickening of soul,  
Send the rose as the speech of a god?  
Did Chance in the winter of Time  
Once marry a salt with a slime,  
And the rose spring unbid from the sod?  
Nay, rather (I think) from on high  
An aerolith out of the sky  
Dropped dizzily downward alone;

A marvel of glory and haze,  
A ball of blue light and a blaze,  
Till it crashed on the ground as a stone.

The metal was molten in mass,  
Yet the fold of an inner crevasse  
Held secret the dust of a star;  
And the wind scattered over the girth  
Of the featureless plains of the Earth,  
The germ of all roses, afar . . .

Who knows, my Belovéd, who knows  
What roses more rare than the rose—  
Star-blossoms, miracle-rife—  
May circle and bloom in the air?  
For look, where the Heavens declare  
The glory and number of Life! MARY DUCLAUX.



E. W. Taylor.

A SURREY MILL-STREAM.

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## MOOR, MOUNTAIN, AND LOCH.

SPORTSMEN, as a rule, are very keen lovers of Nature; but they suffer from the one great disadvantage that they have to observe times and seasons, and so it is evident that the picturesque scenery in which they practise their amusements is usually familiar to them in one aspect only. It is very often a beautiful one, and not common to the general tourist. For example, the fisherman who penetrates to the Highlands early in spring—say about the beginning of May, or even as late as June—beholds a spectacle very different from that which greets the traveller later in summer. The scenery has as much charm then as at any other time of the year; buds are bursting, birds are singing, the rivulets are frequently full of water, and on the great hillslopes the blackness of winter is gradually giving way to the vivid green of spring. But there is an opposite side to the medal. The weather in every part of England is treacherous at this season, but much more so in the Highlands than elsewhere. At one time the spring sun shines with a heat that reminds one of June; but it is liable to be very suddenly overcast, and when this occurs it is as likely as not that a biting east wind will spring up and bring with it showers of that rain which is both the coldest and the most wetting. Nor is it possible when a retreat is made to the shelter of an inn to make amends

for this rough treatment out of doors by comfort within. Highland inns for the most part exist only for the summer trade. They reap an immense harvest in the time of holidays, cheap trips, and excursions, but comparatively early in the autumn the proprietors know that no course is open to them except to put up the shutters and close the doors, and live—if they continue there at all—in some remote corner, while in the other rooms the furniture is all draped and preserved as well as it can be from cold and damp.

The angler, too, often has experience of this sort of thing; he finds that the waiters, whom he very likely contemned during the summer for being Germans or Italians, have gone off on what is euphemistically called "holiday," that is to say, they have sought winter engagements in town restaurants and eating-houses. Scarcely a maid remains, for every Scottish innkeeper has the national frugality at heart, and wastes as little money as he can upon unnecessary luxuries. Thus, the angler may think himself fortunate if he can secure anything in the shape of a bed, while he must take his food as it is sent to him. In compensation for all this he has the solitude of the glens and hills all to himself. He will hear no rude voices reciting the stock quotations at cliff and waterfall, and he will not be disturbed by the debarkation of

crowds of coaching tourists. His hands may tingle with cold, but his fastidious mind will not be upset by intrusion, and should he stay long enough for the purpose it would be pleasant in this silence and loneliness to watch how slowly spring lags up these heights; how the leaf unfolds more gradually and gracefully than in the Lowland country, and how fronds unfurl, not suddenly, but so slowly that the growth is imperceptible. Then, should he remain yet longer, he will see the gold come over great wide expanses, where the whin and the broom grow together, and he will see the hedgerows whiten with blossom. But when that happens, the time will have arrived at which he must bid farewell to these haunts and leave them for a time to the will of the holiday-maker, who begins to arrive at the end of June or at the opening of July, and does not think of departing in large numbers until the last of the August suns has set. Yet we doubt if those who seem to have chosen the pick of the year for their outing really see the Highland country in its most beautiful aspect. It is, as we have said, exquisite in spring, when the birch is assuming its first shimmering mantle of leaves, and the sap is stirring in the bracken and in the grass.

In autumn it assumes a glory that well-nigh rivals all this. The month of September is that in which the heather reaches its utmost stage of beauty. Now it lies like a great purple covering over miles of hill and glade, and the scent comes down the wind with the fragrance of honey. Were it not for the fact that during September and October the weather is not to be trusted, and that brilliant sunshine is frequently followed by squalls of wind and torrents of rain, these would be the finest months to spend in the Highlands, for now summer is resigning her sway, the trees are beginning to assume the



A. Horsley Hinton.

IN EARLY JUNE.

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"SET FAIR."

yellow tints autumn brings with it, and they fall into a harmony of inconceivable beauty with the heather-clad hills and the lakes that in their silvery whiteness reflect the rays of the sun. The air, too, is characterised by a poignant freshness so absent from it in summer. Perhaps, if the truth were told, it is a relief to many of us that rain often comes to put the soil in a condition which renders it unfit for the performances of feats of pedestrianism. According to an old proverb, "it takes some o' all sorts to make a world," and it would be ungracious to criticise or interfere with those people whose idea of a holiday is to exert their physical strength to the utmost, and, generally speaking, wear themselves out. So also it would be far from our intention to say anything derogatory of those whose main idea is sport.

But there is a third category of people with whom we have a very considerable amount of sympathy. We refer to those persons who may or may not be strenuous in the pursuit of some calling, business, or profession in town, but who, when they seek relaxation, ask nothing better than to saunter and dawdle. Mr. Chamberlain has told us that he has always found sufficient exercise in walking upstairs to his bedroom, and without going quite so far as that, there are many who find it sufficient for the maintenance of their health to live for a certain proportion of their time in the open air, not set on the performance of any particular feat, and feeling bored when drawn into any settled engagement. This probably holds more true of a dreamy nature than of any other. To one of that temperament it is



A LOVELY MOUNTAIN ROAD.

wearying to be ever doing things, whether the things referred to be visiting places or joining in sports and pastimes. They eschew the motor-car, because it flies too swiftly over the ground to allow of that mental tranquillity which is their first requirement. They do not care for any kind of cycle, because the



A BLEAK PASS.

machine requires a certain amount of their attention, even though it be given almost automatically. They may not object to an open carriage provided that it be drawn by a sufficiently fat and lazy horse, that will not hurry them out of their contemplative mood. Most of all, however, do they like to be on their own feet. After all, there are advantages connected with being on foot that no other mode of locomotion possesses. The pedestrian, for instance, is not at all bound to stick to the high road, and all the most interesting things of Nature are to be seen either in the



WHERE WHITE HEATHER GROWS.

open fields, in woodland, or on bypaths. Then, again, restfulness is of the very essence of good observation. The man who moves about very quietly, and who is quite content to sit tranquilly in the sun or shade, according to the state of the thermometer, has an opportunity of seeing much that is denied

to others. Walking through the woodland, one has often observed that the place seems emptied of inhabitants; but let the traveller sit down contentedly on a log for a little while, and soon the shy and hiding animals begin to pop out of the crevasses and cover into whose concealment they have dropped at the approach of a strange footfall. Even on the open moor this stands good. Grouse, that have now become so wild as to scurry away from the sportsman's most distant approach, seem to know as if by instinct when the visitor is harmless, and often will come quite close to him. Even the dun deer, that the stalker finds so difficult to get near, come down from the hills to feed in full sight of the man who can sit still. The hill hare, wildest of all his tribe, pursues his way, lopping along with that easy gallop of his, regardless of the figure that sits like some statue looking out on the open moor. And as to rabbits, they pop out of their holes in the most friendly manner as soon as they are assured that guns and dogs are not awaiting them. Indeed, they frequently do not wait for this, inasmuch as the sportsman who will stop quietly in front of their burrows need wait but a very short while before seeing the creatures all around him. Probably he never saw them emerge out of their holes; but one moment he looks and nothing at all is visible, and the next moment two or three rabbits are grazing on the tussocks of grass, or lifting their pretty fore feet to look around for danger. And the winged inhabitants of the moor pursue their tasks as if unconscious of strange eyes upon them. Hawks now, owing to the young having been fledged and entered, are bolder and more numerous than at any

other time; and all the pleasures of falconry may be obtained by the solitary who lives not for himself and for himself alone.

## NOTES UPON FLIGHT SHOOTING

THE flight shooting of wildfowl is carried on in the early morning and at the close of the day. It is also practised on moonlight nights, the most favourable of these being when the sky is obscured by white fleecy clouds, against which the dark forms of the flying fowl are plainly visible. Assuming that the sportsman has observed the approximate line of flight which the birds take, he posts himself in a favourable position and, hiding himself from view as well as he can, awaits their approach. In the morning fowl betake themselves out to sea, and in the evening they return, so the gunner may have a very fair idea of the direction from which they will come. *En passant*, however, it may here be remarked that, owing to weather or other circumstances, there will be occasionally birds coming in from the sea in the morning as well as going out, and it is therefore advisable to keep a watch then in both directions as well as can be effected. At evening flight, birds will almost always be found coming in, and only a few stragglers or some exceptional species going out.

When you sally out in the early morning to wait for fowl, get yourself into position before it is light, so that no movement need be made when you are visible to the birds. Their eyesight is marvellously keen, they are very suspicious of any moving figures, and will completely alter their flight if they have any cause for alarm. The gun should be held so that you can spring up at a moment's notice and handle it with ease and accuracy, as birds fly so fast that they are upon the shooter and have passed over in a twinkling. This is especially so when they are travelling with the wind, and in the latter case it is essential always to fire well ahead of the leading bird. It is hardly necessary to mention that smoking is disadvantageous; flying



game can easily discern the smoke or red light at a very long distance, and will change their route accordingly, while the odour of burning tobacco is detectable at a longer range than is often believed, especially by birds who "scent" danger, such as the widgeon, whose sense of smell is exceedingly keen, and who will take himself well away from anywhere of which he has conceived a suspicion. Care should be taken to avoid making any unnecessary noise or shouting to any fellow-gunner while you are in wait. Even if a wind is blowing which will carry the sound of your voice away from the direction in which you think the birds lie, it may reach those that are perhaps travelling towards you against the wind and warn them off. Ducks (especially are easily frightened by the human voice, which, moreover, if the air be still, is very far reaching. Morning flight generally lasts the best part of an hour (sometimes more), and birds often fly over in bunches in very rapid succession; the gunner therefore should be particular to keep a small supply of cartridges in a handy pocket, so that he wastes no time fumbling about for them, as, if the position occupied is a good one, expeditious loading is very necessary, and delay perhaps means the losing of good opportunities. Should the birds be passing over against the wind, be careful not to aim too far ahead of them, for although this may be a fault rather upon the right side, and can sometimes be corrected with the second barrel, it should be remembered that the wind is reducing the speed of their flight, and allowance made accordingly. Though it is hardly possible to lay down any fixed rule upon such a point, it may perhaps be stated that experienced fowlers, if it be blowing hard, generally aim about 2ft. to 3ft. in front of birds within average range flying with the wind, and almost at the head if flying against under similar conditions.

A good dog is a very useful companion when flighting, but it should be under proper and complete control, else it is worse than useless and only spoils sport. Birds that have been hit when travelling at a great rate—unless struck in the head or wing, when they usually drop at once—will sometimes be carried by the impetus of their speed some very considerable distance before falling. It is by no means uncommon for fowl which have been mortally wounded to go 100yds. and more after being hit, and be then picked up perfectly dead; if they should fall in water and no boat is handy, a dog may be of the greatest help in their recovery, and will often save the sportsman the vexation of having to leave his game behind for the benefit of the carrion crow or the black-backed gull. If you have no dog with you and your bird drops some distance from the land, should the wind be blowing it on the surface of the water towards you, wait a while, and the chances are it will drift gently ashore. It is well, therefore, to exercise a little patience when a bird is precipitated beyond reach, instead of turning away in disgust at its apparent loss.

It is generally an accepted fact that a gale from the sea is the best for flighting, because the water becomes untenable by most fowl in stormy weather, and they will fly in-shore for shelter; more especially is this the case at evening flight, when in a gale they will often come to land in great numbers. The methods adopted by the shooter at evening are much the same as those for the morning; he will probably find that the best time to get into position is about half-an-hour before dusk, when birds begin to move about. Bird calls are then sometimes of use, especially if the fowl are flying low, for they will often be attracted by the sound and come within close range, thus giving the gunner a better chance of a shot. Personally, I have not found calls of much advantage at morning flight, perhaps because the majority of birds at that time are more or less intent upon journeying *from* the land, while at night-time they seek food on shore, and are more likely to settle where they believe other of their kind are located. Bird calls for

various fowl may be purchased at a small cost from most gun-makers. While upon the subject of flighting mention should be made of night shooting. This description can hardly be put forward as being well adapted to beginners, nor could its pursuit be recommended to anyone who has not a complete knowledge of his ground, and a good insight into the work before him. It is certainly exciting sport, but it often entails risk, as apart from the possibility of landing one's self in some ditch or bog in the bid light, there is also the danger of being fired upon in error by some other gunner. If one is shooting over one's own property this latter risk is of course lessened, but if one is upon the shore, or upon common land, the possibility of such an accident is by no means remote. Should you, therefore, when night shooting, perceive any other individual firing close at hand, if practicable it may be well to acquaint



J. M. Whitehead.

## UP THE CLEUCH.

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him of your presence, so that he may not direct shots towards where you are situated. For night sport a dog is certainly necessary; many a bird is lost by the solitary sportsman who brings his game down but cannot find it afterwards, and nothing is much more vexing than to know you have winged or killed your bird and are compelled to go away without it. Much valuable time is often wasted, and opportunities lost, by searching for fallen fowl, which a good dog, such as a spaniel or retriever, would probably recover in a very few moments. As regards dress most suitable at night, many wild-fowlers don a white overcovering, as this colour is more in keeping with the general effect produced by a moonlight night; if, however, this is not forthcoming, light grey may be worn, but not clothes of any dark hue, as such colours render your figure too conspicuous, especially on a light frosty night.

## BIRDS AS INSECT EATERS.

THE extraordinary industry which all the smaller insectivorous birds exhibit in procuring food for their young has often been discussed. Observation of several species has shown that the parent birds will, when their family is growing up, make between them in the neighbourhood of 500 visits to the nest in the course of a day, carrying on each occasion a whole beak-load of gnats or spiders or larvæ. For the birds which feed on gnats, or other small life, generally take to their young not single insects, but a whole collection at a time, and it has been estimated that one



C. Reid, Wishaw, N.B.

CHAFFINCHES.

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6min. On no occasion did he remain at the punt for more than 15sec., or just long enough to turn over the food collected on the last trip to the proper youngster and be off again.

Myriads of gnats were dancing above the water, and at each dip the bird struck at one, but one could not see whether he always caught his quarry or not. As far as it was possible to guess, he always did. On his shortest absence he made over forty shots, and from that the

number ran up to considerably over 200. Supposing that he missed his aim half the time, or afterwards dropped or swallowed the insects, so that half of them were wasted, and failed to reach the family at home, there must have been from 1,500 to 2,000 gnats brought back to the punt in the course of that one hour. Later in the day both parent birds were hawking simultaneously, each returning methodically to the young every 2min. or 3min. What the gross consumption of insects was in the course of the day it is impossible to guess, but it can hardly have been less than 10,000 or 15,000, and was probably twice as many.

This habit of accumulating a good mouthful of insects at a time is illustrated in the accompanying photograph of the willow-wren, whose beak fairly bristles with the bodies and legs of crane-flies. The great tit, on the other hand, is content to bring home from market one good solid caterpillar. That one caterpillar, however, in proportion to the size of a young tit, would be about equivalent to a leg of mutton to a man. But we know that some birds, as, for instance, a robin, even in captivity, when its



C. Reid.

BLACKBIRD AND YOUNG.

Copyright.

pair of spotted fly-catchers in this way destroy some 15,000 gnats and small flies in the course of a week, while other birds, such as wagtails, must destroy considerably more.

A few weeks ago I spent an hour in taking the record of a pied wagtail, which had its brood of newly-fledged young ones in an old disused punt that had settled down at its moorings into the mud at the side of a pond in a private park. During the hour the male bird alone was looking after the family, the female amusing herself by running about on the neighbouring bank, catching insects for her own consumption, and varying the occupation with long spells of attention to her toilet. The male bird, on the other hand, never rested for one minute from his work of bread-winning. As his hunting-ground was the open surface of the pond, above which he flitted in the little dipping flight so characteristic of the species (and surely one of the most beautiful flights in all birddom), he was never out of my sight. In the course of the hour he made twenty-eight trips, the shortest absence from the young lasting 1½ min., and the longest nearly



C. Reid.

WILLOW-WREN.

Copyright.



appetite might be expected to be not altogether of the best, will eat more than twice their own weight in food in a single day. When we remember what large broods most of the tits have, it is not surprising, even though caterpillars be fat and plentiful, that during the early summer months every tit we see seems to be eternally busy rummaging for food for its family.

The wren is another bird addicted to large families, and its house-keeping cares must be correspondingly burdensome. Fortunately, however, young wrens are small, and comparatively easily filled up, even with spiders and such minute fry. What the parent thrushes or blackbirds would do if they had to keep satisfied ten or a dozen youngsters as capacious and hungry as young thrushes and blackbirds always are, even with such solid victuals as earthworms and slugs and snails, it is difficult to conjecture.

When Nature permits a bird of any size to have more than a very moderate number of young at a time, she generally arranges



C. Reid.

GREAT TIT.

Copyright.

that the young shall be able in large measure to shift for themselves as soon as they are hatched, otherwise the mere finding of food for them would be beyond their parents' power. When the young of any species of bird of any considerable size have to be fed for some length of time upon the nest, the number of young to a brood is always small.

There is evidence that the more ignorant kind of "bird-lover," in his indiscriminate enthusiasm for the preservation of all kinds of feathered life, is allowing himself to go too far, and there are signs of a reaction inspired by the complaints of farmers and fruit-



C. Reid.

THE KINGFISHER'S HOME.

Copyright.

growers in all parts of the country. There can be no doubt that there are species of birds which, under the present wave of protective enthusiasm, are growing altogether too numerous, and, as in the case of starlings and rooks, a crusade for the diminution of numbers will soon have to be inaugurated. In regard to a few species, it is still justifiable to doubt whether they do more harm or more good, but in the case of the majority of kinds the balance of good and evil is easily struck. If the two kinds mentioned above, starlings and rooks, must on the weight of the evidence be condemned, there is, on the other hand, only one of all the species shown in these photographs (with the possible exception of the kingfisher, which must be judged by another court and under another code) the general beneficence of which is likely to be called seriously in question, and that is the blackbird. For the rest, in the light of the facts and figures given above, who shall say how far beyond calculation is the amount of benefit which they confer on mankind every year? As it is the farmer and the fruit-grower of the rural districts who suffer most by the

depredations of injurious birds, the person who feels most the lack of the beneficial ones is probably the suburban gardener. He knows to the full the burden of the plague of superabundant insect life. What would it not be worth to those who have gardens in the neighbourhoods of our larger towns if but one pair of each of the birds shown in these photographs—robin, wren, willow-wren, blackbird, thrush,



C. Reid, Wishaw, N.B.

THRUSH AND YOUNG.

Copyright.

chaffinch, and great tit—could be induced to breed regularly in every half acre or acre of garden? H. P. R.

## FEOGHDAWN.

THE white strand of Kilbrittian sparkles in the sun, bright as the wild Atlantic surges that race green-blue into the wide half-moon of the bay. A lonely, silent, curlew-haunted place, strewn with tiny shells, fragile and transparent, polished like jewels; many coloured in their diaphanous thinness as the ghosts of dead flowers, raised by palingenesis. Kilbrittian lies, with the Old Head of Kinsale on the one side of it, and the Seven Heads standing away out to ocean on the other; and midway, black against the horizon, one solitary point of rock, over which the great waves break in clouds of spouting drifting foam. From Barra Point to O'Donohue's Tower there is no sign of human habitation, though here and there, hidden in the folds of the low hills, are little farms and cabins where the fisher-folk live. The hills are silent in the August day, dim, hyacinthine with the heath and heather, golden with the fading bracken, and always billowing over their crests, the white fleeciness of the slow-sailing clouds. Sometimes in the early morn the mists drift over them, grey and chill, or a burst of rain in the midday, diamond bright in the sun. Always beautiful, always wonderful, solitary and still, with no voice to break their solitudes save the falling of water, or the far-reaching call of the sea.

This morning I sat in the little church, built amid the ruins of a once famous monastery. The simple house was filled with the fishermen and their womenkind, a reverent quiet crowd. Four little acolytes attended the old grey priest who said mass. Four little children, pure and sweet, who sat during the short exhortation, with their chins in their palms, wide-eyed and grave, like meditating angels. A dove came in through the wide-set door and perched upon an arm of the rood, preening its white feathers. A little child crooned to itself happily in its girl-mother's arms. The wind came in fitfully, heavy with the odour of the sea, and over all, through all, permeating all, the sound of the restless, illimitable ocean. Part of the exhortation was in the Erse, part in the English, as it came into the old father's mind. It was strange and mystical—unexpected in this remote place—yet as it ought to be; for it was of supernatural things the father talked, warning his flock against the Unknown. To beware of the thing that could not be met in the Name of God. And ever as he talked, in his low, deep Irish voice, I saw a little stir among the people, a shuddering that passed as the wind passes when it blows over the flowering grass; and side glances at one who sat immovable under the hood of her great Irish cloak, white-faced and still. I wondered



C. Reid.

THE WREN.

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would not be likin' Them to hear me," he said softly. "Yet you would say, 'Who can hear?' an' we so far by ourselves. 'Twas nigh Samhain, as I was tellin', an' there came a stranger up to Timoleague in his boat. I never saw a more beautiful man in my days. The tallness of him, an' the blackness of his hair, an' the blueness of his eyes, an' the broadness that was on his shoulders—'twas like two men's strength he had—an' the birds might sing sweeter than the voice of him, but I would be doubtin' it. An' I have cause to tell; for he broke the heart in me with it. Well, he came courtin' Maire with the yellow locks—Maire Budh—that would have been mine, an' he put the glamour on her so that she would 'a' gone to the crook of his little finger, though the heart in her was pure as a one night's snow. A fisherman from Clifden he said he was—sorrow on the sayin'—an' the big boat he had was his own. A strange boat that; long an' thin, an' with the swiftness on her, that she would sail in the wind's eye, an' outrun the wind. An' himself was to marry Maire, but he was puttin' it off, an' off, an' not a one of us ever askin' why. An' every night he put out in the boat an' off to Clifden, as we thought. 'Twas the bitter drop to

me to see Maire waitin' for him at the dark, an' settin' him off in the gloamin'; but I bore up, for I would not let her know. But one dark night she sat in her own door, up there on the hill, an' I by the jamb, an' I heard him call her off the sea. Yes, you may well look; but clear as you hear me, I heard him call her name, an' so did she. Off she went like a fawn. But there was a somethin' in my mind that all was not right, an' I followed her. There, out in the blackness of the sea, was a ring of



C. Reid.

BIRDS AS INSECT EATERS: A ROBIN AT HOME.

Copyright.



white light, an' out of it came a singin' that tore the soul out of my body with sweetness. Never did I hear the like of it—never. In a good hour be it spoken, may I hear the like again. 'Maire! Maire!' called the voice, an' 'Maire! Maire!' She stepped in my old boat that lay up in the sand, an' I ran her out to the brightness on the waves. What lay in it I do not know, but I heard a voice call again, an' the sound of it turned the blood in me to water, for it was the very voice of love—'Maire!'

"She stood up in the bows an' threw herself forward, callin' back to him that cried to her. 'My soul for the price of his!' she says, an' with that she would have been in the sea, but I caught her, an' held her tight. 'Wherever your soul may pay the price,' says I, 'Maire Asthore, your body stays with me.' An' with that there came against me the first of three great waves, high as the hills, an' the last of them was the greatest of all, an' in it was the sound of singin' an' laughter, an' a caressin' voice that talked an' bade me have no fear. Fear I had, but it held on to God, an' cried to his Holy Mother that I might not let her go. So the wave fled away an' left her in my arms, drenched an' still.

"I took her home on my shoulder, with the gulls an' the curlews screamin' roun' me an' the plover cryin' all the way, but I neer looked back, or hearkened to the voice that talked in my ear, or said word beyond the prayer that was in my heart that I might be saved from the sea. For the sea was about me an' around me that night, an' the voice that talked was the sound of the sea itself, an' the saltness of it in my lips an' in my eyes, an' in the breath I drew.

"The man that went out in the eve came back never to Maire Budh. She saw his face no more; an' sometimes her mother would be thinkin' it was the grief that makes her what she is, an' sometimes the father will be sayin' 'it is a blast she got.' But there does be a Wise Woman beyond Barra, an' she said to me a strange thing, that you will not be mentionin' to the good Father. The name of the man that courted Maire was Morgan, an' that name does be meanin' 'a man from the sea!' An' there will be a cousin of mine in Arran that told me he saw him there walkin' the shore in a long cloak of blue, an' a green tunic under it, that had a fringe to it like the feoghdaun in harvest—white as the driven snow.

"An' who will you be thinkin' that is but Mananan, the son of Lir, that lived a thousand year ago. An' as for Maire Budh, I am thinkin' that the soul of her is with him, though how that can be I do not know, seein' she was baptised. But I'm not livin' this forty year without findin' out that there is more in the sea than comes out of it, an' what it takes it keeps, an' what it wills it throws back to the land, an' what it has had will be its own for ever."

FRANCES CAMPBELL.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

### BUILDING BYE-LAWS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Will you allow me to draw the attention of your readers to the report, which has just appeared under the unattractive title of the Public Health Acts (Amendment) Bill, of the evidence given on this question before a Select Committee of the House of Lords, of which Lord Allerton was chairman. This report was ordered to be printed by the House of Commons on August 11th last. The object of the Bill, which was promoted by the Building Bye-laws Reform Association, of which the Duke of Westminster is President, and which was introduced into and carried through the House of Lords by Lord Hylton, was (shortly) to exempt isolated buildings from the operation of building bye-laws, save in regard to sanitary matters, and to enable to be done in the country what can now be done in the metropolis under Section 201 of the London Building Act of 1894. But the evidence given before the Select Committee is not only important as setting out clearly the arguments for and against the Bill, but still more important as a most valuable contribution to a better understanding of the difficulties of the subject generally. The evidence should be carefully read by all who are interested in this very burning question. As the Bill, however, may take some time to become an Act of Parliament, I would beg for a little of your valuable space to suggest another method of giving immediate relief to builders of houses and cottages, whether as landowners, architects, or others, who now complain so much and so justly of the hardship attending the rigid enforcement of these bye-laws on all alike, regardless of difference of circumstances. Might not the analogy of the Poor Law orders as to the grant of poor relief be followed? Both the prohibitory order and the outdoor relief regulation order have to be complied with; but if a Board of Guardians wishes to give relief not authorised by the orders, it can do so, provided it informs the Local Government Board of its action within twenty-one days of the grant of the forbidden relief, and the latter authority can then allow or disallow it as it thinks fit. Now suppose a District Council finds that to enforce any particular bye-law would be unnecessary, absurd, or unjust in any particular case. Why should it not be allowed to grant an exemption from the bye-law, subject to the approval of the Local Government Board? It would follow a procedure similar to that of a Board of Guardians in granting relief which is not strictly legal. Thus it would have to report what it had done to the Local Government Board within a specified time, sending up plans, and giving all the necessary information, together with the reasons which led it to grant the exemption. The experienced staff of the Local Government Board would deal with these

cases in a very short time (it might mean the appointment of an extra clerk or two), as the cases would, as a rule, be quite simple and straightforward. And I venture to say that only in a few cases would the action of the local authority be liable to be overruled. Everyone who has studied the subject is, I think, agreed that there is a great danger in allowing a District Council to exercise an unfettered discretion as to when it should enforce or not enforce its building regulations; but if the final decision lay with a body which would deal with the case without local prejudice or bias, that danger would not be present. Further, the expense of Courts of Appeal, established *ad hoc*, would be saved. I do not think that any Act of Parliament would be necessary to enable the Local Government Board to issue the necessary exemption order. But if an Act is required, it is hard to see how any opposition could be offered to so reasonable a proposal, supposing the Local Government Board is willing to accept the responsibility thrown upon it. Anyway, I venture to submit the idea for what it is worth, and I shall be glad to have the names of any of your readers who may be inclined to support it. I should like to add that I am not in any way an opponent of building bye-laws, but I want to see them enforced with some consideration for differing conditions. In order to meet an undoubted evil the Local Government Board of thirty years ago rushed to an extreme. Although they must be fully alive to the mistake that was then made (*e.g.*, by the issuing of the new Rural Models), there is a danger that public opinion may now rush to the other extreme and ask for building bye-laws to be done away with altogether in rural districts. This would be a very great mistake. Without doing away with building bye-laws, the general complaints of their being enforced hard and fast and with no consideration for difference of circumstances and surroundings would, I think, be put a stop to if the suggestion which I have made were carried into effect.—W. CHANCE, Orchards, near Godalming.

### THE REVIVAL OF ENGLISH AGRICULTURE.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I have been a subscriber to your paper almost since the first number. Can you tell me what you mean in your leader of September 2nd as to the prospect of English agriculture improving? I am most anxious to catch the first gleam of hope for the farmer. I enclose the cutting I refer to.—F. J. R.

[Our correspondent cannot do better than turn to the recently-issued preliminary agricultural returns. He will find that during last year the wheat area was increased by over 400,000 acres, and that farmers everywhere are increasing their livestock. These are two of the facts on which our opinion was founded.—ED.]

### INSECT COLUMNS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—The letter of Mr. C. J. Cornish, in COUNTRY LIFE reminds me of two grey columns of midges, seen above a damp meadow, one summer's evening, between Symonds Yat and Monmouth: they rose perpendicularly to a height of eight or ten feet, waving a little (the air was very still); each was about two inches in diameter a few inches above the ground and four or five inches at six feet, with defined edges, and they were several yards apart. On clapping my hands across one I found a number of midges had been killed: the column immediately closed up as before, and I had to pass on.—STANLEY HAYNES, M.D., Malvern.

### A TOLEDO DOORWAY.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I find that the sketch of the above in your last week's issue is attributed to Mr. Whitaker Watson, R.B.A. It should have been Mr. P. Fletcher Watson, R.B.A. I am afraid my writing must have been to blame.—B. L.

### GOLD-FISH AND FROST.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Could you or any of your readers kindly tell me if there are different kinds of gold-fish, and what is the right species to obtain for an outdoor water-lily cement pond? Also, where could I get them? Hitherto I have got some from fishmongers' shops. Some lived through one mild winter, but, as a rule, though the ice was broken, they died in a frost. As I hear of fish living in fountain tanks, etc., to a great age, I conclude there must be a hardy sort, and should be much obliged for any information.—W.

[The common gold-fish should live through an average English winter, but they must have air. When their tank is frozen over, break a hole, and take out two or three buckets of water, so as to leave a space between water and ice, and, of course, shut off all taps. Should a very severe frost occur, protect the tank, or one corner of it, with straw hurdles.—ED.]

### OLD DOVECOTES.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I read with much pleasure Mr. Strickland's letter about the colombier at Daglingworth. There is one at Furtho, near here, very like it, save that it has on its summit a four-posted spirelet. If you could gather a complete set of these interesting and fast-vanishing buildings, you would indeed confer an added favour on many of your readers. I do not know why they should be destroyed here, as they were in France by the peasantry, who, after all, had a well-founded grudge against them, which our people never had. Gloucestershire and Worcestershire are, I think, the counties where most of the best are preserved. There is a quaint old one at Bourton, not far from this; but neither of those I quote has the ladders intact. I have visited many of them in France—one at Augo, near Dieppe, and specially one at Boos, near Rouen, on the road to Fleury sur Audelle, octagonal outside and circular within, and well worth visiting. I made a special journey by road to see it in 1890, and trust it is still well cared for; it is a real gem of art. Measured drawings of it have been

published, but no drawing can fully convey the charm of its colour scheme of many-tinted and lichen brick, stone, and tile. There are also many yet existing, more or less dilapidated, in Brittany. I well remember a visit to one of them, from which I emerged in torment, covered with fleas, after the operation. There are some interesting examples in Viollet le Duc's "Dictionnaire," but very few are now to be found with the "potence," or any fragment of it, remaining. This interesting word appears to be analogous with the heraldic word "potent," a cross potent being a crutch-headed one.—E. SWINFEN HARRIS, Stony Stratford.

[We are always glad to publish photographs of ancient and interesting dovecotes.—ED.]

#### A CIRCULAR PIGEON-COTE.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—My attention has been drawn to the representation of a circular pigeon-cote in your issue of July 22nd. It may interest your correspondent to know that I have one in my garden which corresponds in every particular to that described by him. My columbier is supposed to be about 300 years old.—SIDNEY LLOYD, Corwen, North Wales.

#### A LONDON OWL.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—In view of the disappearance of so many birds formerly common in London, it came as a surprise to me to be told that a pair of owls live, if not within the four-mile circle, only a few yards outside it, in the grounds of Fulham Palace. Recently a third bird put in an appearance from somewhere, and, taking refuge in a barn, was caught and caged by the gardener there. I enclose his photograph, from which you will see that he is a specimen of the tawny owl. The other pair, which have occupied their present quarters for many years without breeding, visit him most nights, sitting on a line-post, and giving out their well-known cry of "to-whit, to-whoo." Perhaps some of your readers know of other members of the family resident in situations as closely built over as Fulham.—G. C. G.

#### A LONDON WOOD PIGEON.

[TO THE EDITOR.]

SIR,—It may be of interest to your readers to know that at the present time we have in the grounds of this institution a wild wood-pigeon sitting on her eggs. There are nearly 1,400 inmates in the house, and the spot she has chosen to build her nest is in a tree on the premises where more inmates and visitors assemble than in any other part of the grounds.—R. BUSHELL, St. Matthew, Bethnal Green Workhouse.

#### WAGTAIL AND CUCKOO.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—On Wednesday, August 9th, 1905, I was sitting in the drawing-room reading, and hearing a lot of chirping, I looked out of the window. And there, on the lawn, was a young cuckoo, with a water-wagtail strutting about



in search of flies and insects to feed the greedy cuckoo with, who was chirping and flapping his wings impatiently. And here was the poor little water-wagtail wearing herself out feeding this big, strong bird, who was too lazy to feed himself. And when he saw me he flew on to the bean-sticks. Then I went on with my book. And soon I heard the same old chirp, and there he was, in the middle of the lawn, chirping away as usual. He was only there for a minute or two, and then off he flew right over the fields with the little water-wagtail following him.—M. C.

[This is a young child's account of an interesting, though not very uncommon, occurrence.—ED.]

#### A STOWAWAY.

[TO THE EDITOR.]

SIR,—The strange little animal in the photograph I send—a mouse opossum (*Didelphys murina*)—reached Scarborough packed in a crate of bananas from South America. Its long prehensile tail enables it, as well as its larger relation, Azara's opossum, to do all manner of acrobatic feats among the branches of trees. One observer has recorded that even when burdened by a group of young ones, who clung to their mother



by twisting their little tails round hers, the agility and swiftness of her movements were amazing.—M. P.

#### TO MAKE HIM COMFORTABLE.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—After a residence of twenty years in Southern California I am enabled to dispose of my interests and return home to England to live with an income of something over £2,500 a year. I should wish to live in the country, preferably on the South Coast, near the sea, and enjoy all kinds of outdoor sports and motoring. I have three sons, aged six, nine, and fourteen, whom I should wish to send to good schools. Can any of your readers give me any advice as to the best part of England for me to settle in, the amount of rent I should pay, the number of servants necessary, etc.; in fact, the most comfortable and enjoyable way for a married man, not Americanised, but still devoted to England and English ways, to spend his time there, after working hard "in exile" to enable him to do so?—AN OLD CARTHUSIAN.

#### WHAT IS HIS TRADE?

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—This photograph has come into my possession, but with never a word of description, and the longer I look at it the more convinced I am that the subject is neither tramp nor ordinary labourer, but the basket and curiously-shaped stick are a puzzle. Perhaps the local knowledge of some of your readers may enable them to say definitely what this gentleman does when in a more active mood than the one depicted here.—M. N.

